

# A Miss-Judgement

## Part One

by C. Black

Another spring semester comes to an end at one particularly distinguished law school...

WELL, THAT'S IT, EVERYONE! LAST LECTURE OF THE YEAR!

AND REMEMBER, ***ALL*** ASSIGNMENTS, PAPERS, AND PROJECTS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN ***NOON*** THIS FRIDAY! ***NO EXCEPTIONS!***

NOON? ON FRIDAY?! SHIT! I THOUGHT WE HAD TILL MONDAY!

I AM SO FUCKED!

WHAT DID YOU FORGET TO DO THIS TIME, STILLMAN?

THE ***GUEST LECTURER*** REQUIREMENT! I ***NEVER*** GOT IT ***DONE!***

I... I JUST FIGURED I'D ***GET*** TO IT SOONER OR LATER! AND I THINK I ***DELETED*** THE EMAIL HE SENT WITH THE LIST!

***SERIOUSLY,*** DUDE? PROFESSOR SCHMIDT POSTED A ***LIST*** OF OVER A ***DOZEN*** VALID LECTURERS AND DATES AT THE ***BEGINNING*** OF THE SEMESTER SO WE COULD SIGN UP ***AHEAD*** OF TIME! AND WE ONLY HAD TO DO ***ONE!***

***HOW*** COULD YOU FUCK ***THAT*** UP?

DO **YOU** STILL HAVE A COPY OF THE LIST?

I'VE STILL GOT **ONE MORE** CLASS TODAY! CAN I GET THE LIST FROM YOU LATER?

**THANKS,** IAN! YOU'RE A **LIFE SAVER!**

PROBABLY! BUT IF I DO, IT'S ON MY **COMPUTER** BACK AT THE HOUSE!

YEAH! JUST STOP BY MY ROOM WHEN YOU GET BACK!

AND **YOU'RE** A FUCKING **LOST CAUSE!**

CAREER

Headline
Brochure

Later that afternoon, at one of the more prestigious legal fraternities on campus...

I TELL YOU, MAX, LETTING THAT MIDWESTERN ***MORON*** INTO OUR HOUSE WAS A ***HUGE*** MISTAKE! I DON'T CARE ***HOW*** GOOD HIS ***UNDERGRADUATE*** GRADES WERE!

IF HE ***FLUNKS OUT*** OF HIS SECOND YEAR OF LAW SCHOOL IT'LL REFLECT ON THE ***WHOLE HOUSE!*** I MEAN, ***HELL,*** THE LITTLE ***FREAK*** DOESN'T EVEN ***DRINK!***

I KNOW, ***I KNOW!*** AND FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME, HE'S JUST HANGING ON BY A ***HAIR!***

YEAH! HIM PASSING OR FAILING PRETTY MUCH RELIES ON ***HIM*** GETTING THIS ***LECTURE*** TAKEN CARE OF BY FRIDAY!

SO IF HE GETS IT DONE, HE ***PASSES...*** BUT WITH PRETTY ***SHITTY*** GRADES! ***NOT*** A GOOD LOOK FOR ***US!***

SO ***WHAT*** DO WE DO?

THAT DEPENDS! ARE THERE ***ANY*** LECTURES BETWEEN NOW AND FRIDAY?

JUST ***ONE!*** ABIGAIL MONROE... SPEAKING ***TOMORROW*** AT ***FOUR*** IN THE MAIN LECTURE HALL! IT'S SPONSORED BY THE WOMEN'S LEGAL FRONT!

***REALLY?*** LEMME SEE!

OH ***YEAH!***
I THINK I KNOW A WAY TO ***SOLVE*** OUR LITTLE ***STILLMAN*** PROBLEM!

Even *later* that afternoon...

THE LECTURE'S FOR **WOMEN** ONLY? HOW THE HELL CAN THEY **DO** THAT?

IT'S **SPONSORED** AND **PAID FOR** BY THE **WOMEN'S LEGAL FRONT!** SO **THEY** MAKE THE RULES!

AND YOU'D **KNOW** THAT IF YOU'D **READ** SCHMIDT'S EMAIL WHEN YOU GOT IT **INSTEAD** OF **DELETING** IT!

SHIT,SHIT, SHIT! I AM SO SCREWED!

HOW? THE WLF HAS ALWAYS BEEN PRETTY FUCKIN' MILITANT AND ISN'T KNOWN FOR MAKING EXCEPTIONS! ESPECIALLY FOR GUYS!

NOT NECESSARILY, YOUNG ROBERT! THERE MIGHT STILL BE A WAY FOR YOU TO ATTEND THAT LECTURE!

YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT! THEY WOULDN'T... FOR A GUY!

EXACTLY! SO HOW THE HELL DO I...?

OH, YOU HAVE GOT TO BE FUCKIN' KIDDING ME!

The next day, early afternoon...

I GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, MAX! YOUR PLAN IS ***BRILLIANT!***

WELL, I'M NOT ***TOP*** OF THE CLASS ***JUST*** 'CAUSE OF MY ***GOOD LOOKS,*** YOU KNOW!

BRILLIANT IDEAS COME WITH THE TERRITORY! HEH-HEH!

I MEAN, THE ***ONLY*** WAY HE ***DOESN'T*** GET KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL AND HAS TO ***MOVE OUT*** IS IF HE PULLS THIS OFF ***WITHOUT*** GETTING BUSTED SO HE ***PASSES*** THE COURSE!

EVEN THEN, ***WE'LL*** BE ABLE TO HOLD IT ***OVER*** HIM IN CASE HE FUCKS UP ***AGAIN!***

IT'S A ***WIN-WIN*** SCENARIO FOR US!

THOSE ARE MY ***FAVORITE*** KIND!


HOW'S IT GOIN' UP THERE?
ALMOST DONE!


YOU KNOW, I'M SURPRISED THE GIRLS SO EASILY AGREED TO HELP US OUT WITH THIS!
I EXPECTED AT LEAST A LITTLE PUSH-BACK FROM THEM, BUT THEY JUMPED INTO THIS ALMOST EAGERLY!
YEAH, IT'S ONE OF THOSE CHICK, DRESS-UP THINGS THEY'RE INTO! GO FIGURE!

OKAY! READY FOR THE GRAND UNVEILING?

C'MON, SWEETIE! DON'T BE SHY!

OH, YEAH! LET'S SEE "HER"!

I REALLY DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!


YOU'RE DOING JUST FINE, SWEETIE! TAKE YOUR TIME!
I SURE AS HELL HOPE SOMEONE'S READY TO CATCH MY ASS WHEN I FALL DOWN THESE STAIRS!
I DON'T SEE WHY I HAVE TO WEAR THESE DAMN SHOES ANYWAY!
BECAUSE THEY GO WITH THE OUTFIT AND THEY MAKE YOUR LEGS LOOK GREAT!

HOLY SHIT!

WOW! YOU GIRLS DID AN AMAZING JOB!

YES... YES, WE DID, DIDN'T WE?

THE CLOTHES ARE MINE, BUT THE ACCESSORIES AND MAKEUP... THAT'S ALL KAYTE'S WORK!

YEAH, ABOUT THESE ***"ACCESSORIES"!*** IGNORING HOW MUCH MY ***EARS*** HURT, HOW'M I GONNA ***EXPLAIN*** MY PIERCED EARS TO ANYONE AFTER TODAY?

***LOTS*** OF GUYS HAVE PIERCED EARS, ROB HONEY! BESIDES, IF YOU LEAVE THEM ALONE, THEY'LL FILL BACK IN IN ***NO TIME!***

WHILE MY ***EYEBROWS*** AND ALL MY ***BODYHAIR*** GROW BACK, RIGHT?

***EXACTLY!*** *GIGGLE!*

A LITTLE ***CINCHING*** HERE AND A LITTLE ***PADDING*** THERE! SECRETS WE ***GIRLS*** HAVE BEEN USING SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL!

***NONSENSE!*** IT'S ***BARELY*** TIGHT AT ALL! IT ***COULD*** BE A LOT ***MORE*** CONSTRICTING IF WE WANTED IT TO... ***TRUST ME!***

OKAY, ***UNFORTUNATELY*** I'VE ***SEEN*** STILLMAN IN HIS UNDERWEAR BEFORE AND KNOW FOR A ***FACT*** HE DOESN'T HAVE ***CURVES*** LIKE THAT! HOW'D YOU ***DO*** IT?

AND IT'S THE ***"CINCHING"*** THAT MAY CAUSE ME TO ***PASS OUT*** HALFWAY THROUGH THE LECTURE!

SO ARE YOU GONNA DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT ***VOICE*** OR PRETEND YOU'RE A ***MUTE?***

OH, WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON *THAT,* TOO! AND *"SHE'S"* GOTTEN PRETTY GOOD! LET THEM HEAR YOU, DEAR!

*A-HEM!* IS *THIS* BETTER?

A LITTLE *ROUGH,* BUT PASSABLE!

WE'LL MAKE SURE SHE GETS A *LOT* MORE PRACTICE WHEN WE WALK HER OVER TO THE LECTURE HALL!


WALK?! IN THESE SHOES? IT'S ALL THE WAY ACROSS CAMPUS!
THEY'RE JUST WEDGES, ROB! NO BIG DEAL! AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO GET USED TO THEM?
IT'LL ALSO GIVE US TIME TO GO OVER ALL THOSE LAST MINUTE DETAILS EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW! *GIGGLE!*

WELL, YOUR LECTURE STARTS IN ABOUT AN HOUR! THAT'LL GIVE US ***PLENTY*** OF TIME TO GET YOU THERE SO YOU'RE NOT LATE!

YEAH, THE ***LAST*** THING I WANT IS ***EVERYONE*** WATCHING ***ME*** AS I WALK IN... AND ***PROBABLY*** FALL ***FLAT*** ON MY ***FACE!***

GOOD LUCK... ***ROBERTA!*** *CHUCKLE!*


*SIGH!* I'M GONNA NEED IT!

SO... THINK HE'LL BE ***PISSED*** WHEN HE REALIZES IT ***WASN'T*** A *"WOMEN ONLY"* LECTURE? *CHUCKLE!*

IT'S HIS ***OWN*** DAMN FAULT FOR ***NOT*** KEEPING A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL, ***UN-EDITED*** LECTURE LIST!

Slam!

BESIDES, ANY **GOOD** SECOND-YEAR LAW STUDENT **SHOULD** RECOGNIZE THAT PUTTING RESTRICTIONS LIKE **THAT** ON A CAMPUS LECTURE IS **PROBLEMATIC** AT BEST!

SO HE **GETS** WHAT HE **DESERVES!**

WHICH **HOPEFULLY** WILL BE A **FAILING GRADE** WHICH GETS HIM OUT OF **OUR** HAIR FOR **GOOD!**

AND, **WORST** CASE SCENARIO, WE'LL **KNOW** WE HAVE A HOUSEMATE WHO'S **GULLIBLE** ENOUGH TO DO **ANYTHING** WE ASK OF HIM!

**ALWAYS** A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE ONE OF **THOSE** LYING AROUND! *CHUCKLE!*

**NO SHIT!** *CHUCKLE!*

A couple of hours later, as the lecture nears its end...

IN CLOSING, I WANT TO ***THANK*** THE ***WOMEN'S LEGAL FRONT*** FOR ASKING ME HERE TODAY! ***ANY*** OPPORTUNITY I GET TO MEET WITH ***FRESH, YOUNG LEGAL MINDS*** LIKE I SEE HERE IS A ***PRIVILEGE*** AS FAR AS ***I'M*** CONCERNED!

AND LIKE I SAID EARLIER, I ***AM*** HOPING TO INTERN A ***CLERK*** FOR THE SUMMER, SO IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY, ***DON'T*** FORGET TO FILL OUT AN ***APPLICATION*** BEFORE YOU LEAVE!

Abigail Monroe

PLEASE FILL OUT A SUMMER CLERK INTERNSHIP APPLICATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN

OKAY... I'M **CONFUSED!** IF THIS WAS A **WOMEN ONLY** EVENT, **WHY** THE **HELL** WERE THERE SEVERAL **GUYS** IN THE AUDIENCE?

DID THEY CHANGE THE **RULES** OR SOMETHING AND I WENT THROUGH **ALL THIS** FOR **NOTHING?**

clap!

clap!

HMMM! CONSIDERING HOW **EAGER** MAX AND IAN WERE IN GETTING ME TO THIS LECTURE **DRESSED** LIKE **THIS,** I **WOULDN'T** BE SURPRISED IF THEY **SET ME UP!**

IN FACT, I'M ALMOST *100% SURE* THEY **DID!** THOSE **FUCKERS!**

clap!

clap!

THANK YOU AGAIN!

clap!

clap!

clap!

clap!

Abigail Monroe

PLEASE FILL OUT A SUMMER CLERK INTERNSHIP APPLICATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN

NOT ***TOO*** BAD OF A TURNOUT CONSIDERING THE SEMESTER IS PRACTICALLY ***OVER!***

MAYBE! BUT I ***STILL*** WOULD'VE LIKED TO HAVE SEEN ***MORE*** OF THOSE SEATS FILLED! MAKES FOR A BETTER ***PHOTO-OP!***

APPLICATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN

WHY DOES ***EVERYTHING*** HAVE TO BE A ***PHOTO-OP*** WITH YOU, HANK? CAN'T YOU JUST ***RELAX*** AND BE A ***SUPPORTING HUSBAND*** FOR A CHANGE?

***HONESTLY!*** ONE LITTLE INQUIRY FROM THE ***STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY*** WONDERING IF I'D BE INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR STATE ***ATTORNEY'S GENERAL*** AND ***YOU*** GO INTO FULL-BLOWN ***ELECTION*** MODE!

THEY ***HAVEN'T*** EVEN OFFICIALLY ***ASKED*** ME YET AND, TRUTHFULLY, I DON'T KNOW IF I'D RUN IF THEY ***DID!***

I'M ***SORRY,*** ABBY! AFTER BEING A POLITICAL OPERATIVE FOR THE PAST ***30 YEARS,*** IT'S MY DEFAULT MODE!

PLEASE FILL OUT A SUMMER CLERK INTERNSHIP APPL[illegible]ON FORM BEF[illegible]IT DOWN

OKAY! I'LL HAVE ALL THE APPLICATIONS IN ORDER WHEN YOU'RE READY TO LEAVE!

I FORGIVE YOU, ***OF COURSE!*** NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'M GOING TO GO ***CHAT*** WITH A FEW OF THE STUDENTS ON THEIR WAY OUT!

ATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN

THEY MAY NOT HAVE ***OFFICIALLY*** ASKED YOU YET, BUT A LITTLE BIRD TELLS ME YOU'RE THE PARTY'S ***TOP PICK*** SO FAR FOR THE POSITION!

I HAVEN'T TOLD ***YOU*** THIS YET BECAUSE I KNOW, DESPITE YOUR ***RELUCTANCE*** TO SAY SO OUT LOUD, YOU'D ***LOVE*** NOTHING MORE THAN TO BE THE ***STATE AG*** AND I DON'T WANT ***YOU*** UNDER ANY UNDO ***STRESS*** UNTIL ABSOLUTELY ***NECESSARY!***

YOUR YEARS IN THE ***DA'S OFFICE*** EARNED YOU A RECORD FOR BEING TOUGH ON CRIME WHICH ***SHOULD*** HELP YOU GET THE ***CONSERVATIVE*** VOTES! BUT ***NOW*** I NEED TO EXPOSE THE PUBLIC TO YOUR ***RECENT*** WORK AS A ***DEFENSE ATTORNEY*** TO HELP YOU WIN OVER THE ***NOT SO CONSERVATIVE*** VOTING BLOCK!

THAT'S ***ONE*** OF THE REASONS WHY I'VE BEEN SCHEDULING ALL THESE CAMPUS TOURS AND VOLUNTEERED TO SPEARHEAD THE SEARCH FOR A NEW SUMMER CLERK!

YOU'VE ***ALWAYS*** BEEN CONTENT WITH HIRING THE USUAL ***BARBIE/KEN STRAIGHT-A*** LAW STUDENTS FOR CLERKS, BUT ***I*** THINK HIRING FROM ***OUTSIDE*** THE USUAL BOX THIS TIME WILL GO A ***LONG WAY*** IN ATTRACTING MORE ***LIBERAL*** VOTES!

BUT THE TRICK IS TO ***NOT*** MAKE IT LOOK TOO ***OBVIOUS!***

WELL, AT **LEAST** IT TURNED OUT TO BE A **WORTHWHILE** LECTURE! I'VE BEEN A FAN OF ABIGAIL MONROE'S WORK IN THE LEGAL COMMUNITY FOR **YEARS!**

AND IT SHOULDN'T BE **TOO** HARD TO TYPE UP A SHORT REFLECTION ON THE LECTURE AND SEND IT TO **SCHMIDT** BEFORE THE DEADLINE SO I CAN **PASS** HIS **COURSE!**

WHAT **WILL** BE HARD, THOUGH, IS GETTING **OUT** OF HERE AND **BACK** TO THE HOUSE DRESSED LIKE **THIS!**

NO ONE MAY HAVE **RECOGNIZED** ME ON THE WAY **OVER,** BUT I WAS WALKING WITH **LAURA** AND **KAYTE** AT THE TIME SO **I** WAS **HARDLY** THE **FOCUS** OF ATTENTION!

**THIS** TIME IT'S JUST **ME... ALONE!** BEST THING I CAN **HOPE** FOR IS NOBODY **RECOGNIZING** ME!


NOW... IF I CAN JUST GET DOWN THESE DAMN STAIRS WITHOUT FACE-PLANTING IN FRONT OF...


OH FUCK!!
*trip*


WHOA THERE! ARE YOU OKAY?
UH...YEAH, THANKS!


IT'S JUST THESE DAMN SHOES...

*AHEM* I MEAN, ***THANK YOU!*** THAT ***REALLY*** COULD'VE HURT IF YOU HADN'T CAUGHT ME!

***SHIT,SHIT,SHIT!*** GET ***BACK*** IN CHARACTER BEFORE HE ***NOTICES!***

I WAS JUST ***LUCKY*** TO BE IN THE RIGHT ***PLACE*** AT THE RIGHT ***TIME!***


STIL... SULL... SULLIVAN! ROB... ROBIN SULLIVAN!
I'M SORRY! GUESS I'M STILL A LITTLE SHAKEN UP BY THE FALL!
AND, YES, I ENJOYED IT VERY MUCH! SHE WAS VERY INSPIRATIONAL!
DID YOU ENJOY THE SPEECH, MISS...?
WELL, SHE'LL BE HAPPY TO HEAR THAT!

HAVE YOU ALREADY FILLED OUT AN APPLICATION FOR THE ***CLERK*** POSITION WITH MY WIFE?

YES... YES I ***DID!*** ALTHOUGH I DON'T HAVE MUCH ***HOPE*** OF GETTING THE POSITION!

WHY NOT?

I'M ***SURE*** SHE WOULD ***MUCH*** RATHER HIRE SOMEONE WITH ***PERFECT*** GRADES INSTEAD OF SOMEONE LIKE ***ME!***

WHAT DO YOU ***MEAN*** "SOMEONE LIKE ***YOU***"?

OH, UH... SOMEONE WITH ***IMPERFECT*** GRADES... AMONG ***OTHER*** THINGS!

***OTHER*** THINGS LIKE ***NOT*** BEING ABLE TO HOLD ONTO A JOB FOR MORE THAN ***2 MONTHS*** AT A TIME, AS YOU'LL SEE ***IF*** YOU FOR SOME UNGODLY REASON ACTUALLY ***LOOK*** AT MY APPLICATION!

GRADES AREN'T ***EVERYTHING,*** MISS SULLIVAN! THINK ***POSITIVELY!***

AND YOU AS WELL, MISS SULLIVAN! ***YOU*** AS ***WELL!***

I ***TRY,*** MR. MONROE! I ***REALLY*** DO!

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I REALLY ***SHOULD*** BE GOING!

IT WAS ***NICE*** CHATTING WITH YOU!


JESUS! I THOUGHT I'D NEVER GET AWAY FROM THAT GUY!
ANY LONGER AND HE MAY HAVE SEEN THROUGH MY DISGUISE!
THANK GOD HE DIDN'T OR I'D BE UP SHIT CREEK!

HMMM! VERY IMPRESSIVE! ***AND*** VERY ***CONVINCING...*** ***EVEN*** UP CLOSE!

BUT THAT UNTIMELY ***FALL*** INTO ME ***ACCIDENTALLY*** REVEALED A WHOLE ***MANNER*** OF ***INCONGRUITIES!***

INCONGRUITIES THAT HAVE MOVED ***YOU*** TO THE ***TOP*** OF MY LIST, *"MISS"* SULLIVAN!

A Few days later...

*ABBY?* I *THOUGHT* YOU WERE IN COURT ALL DAY!

I *WILL* BE! BUT I WAS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND WAS *JUST* LEAVING YOU A NOTE!

BY THE WAY, HOW GOES THE ***SEARCH*** FOR A SUMMER CLERK?

***WITHOUT*** ANY INPUT FROM ***ME?*** REALLY?

***GREAT!*** I'VE GOT A COUPLE OF REALLY ***PROMISING*** PROSPECTS I'M LOOKING AT!

I HOPE TO HAVE IT ***LOCKED UP*** NO LATER THAN ***TOMORROW!***

I *THINK* I KNOW YOU WELL ENOUGH TO HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF THE *TYPE* OF PEOPLE YOU LIKE WORKING WITH!

WE'VE *ONLY* BEEN MARRIED FOR *35 YEARS,* AFTER ALL!

I *SUPPOSE* I CAN LET YOU HANDLE IT *ALONE* THIS TIME!

HAVING *ONE LESS THING* ON MY PLATE TO WORRY ABOUT IS *ALWAYS* A BLESSING!


I'LL SEE YOU LATER TODAY! LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU, TOO!

I GUESS I ***MIGHT'VE*** EXAGGERATED A LITTLE WHEN I SAID I HAD A "COUPLE" OF PROSPECTS FOR THE JOB, BECAUSE I'M ***LASER-FOCUSED*** ON ONE ***PARTICULAR*** APPLICANT!

ONE THAT'LL BOTH ***IMPRESS*** THE ***DNC*** AND ***SEAL*** THE ***LIBERAL*** VOTE!

HAVING A YOUNG ***TRANSWOMAN*** ON THE SUMMER STAFF WILL BE QUITE THE ***FEATHER*** IN ABBY'S CAP AS FAR AS THE ***LGBTQ-PLUS*** COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED!

OF COURSE, IT'D BE ***BEST*** TO PLAY IT ***STRATEGICALLY*** AND LET IT SLIP OUT ***AFTER*** THE FACT SO WE DON'T LOOK ***TOO*** OBVIOUS!

WHICH WORKS OUT IN OUR FAVOR SINCE THE SPECIAL ELECTION ISN'T UNTIL ***NEXT*** JUNE, WHICH WILL GIVE US ***PLENTY*** OF TIME TO DEVELOP A ***BALANCE*** IN COURTING ***BOTH*** THE CONSERVATIVE ***AND*** LIBERAL VOTERS!

IRONICALLY, THOUGH, THE ONLY POSSIBLE BUMP IN MY PLAN IS THE YOUNG "LADY" IN QUESTION!

CONSIDERING HOW SHE FILLED OUT HER APPLICATION, THE WAY SHE APPEARED THE OTHER DAY MAY BE LIMITED TO HER ON-CAMPUS LIFE ONLY!

I ONLY HOPE I CAN CONVINCE HER OTHERWISE!

A short time later, back on campus...

HEY, ***ROBERTA!*** WHEN YOU'RE DONE DOWN THERE, BRING ME UP A BEER, WOULD YA? *HAR-HAR!*

YEAH, THAT'S ***NEVER*** GONNA GET OLD, MAX!

***ASSHOLES!***


OKAY, THE MOMENT OF TRUTH!


YES! GOT THE PAPER TURNED IN JUST UNDER THE WIRE! SCHMIDT'S GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO PASS ME NOW! IT'S BY THE SKIN OF MY TEETH, BUT I'LL TAKE IT!
YEAR TWO... NOT PRETTY, BUT DONE!

THIS'LL **ALSO** GET ME OFF THE HOOK WITH THE **REST** OF THE HOUSE... AT LEAST **FOR NOW!**

ANY **FAILED** COURSE IS GROUNDS FOR BEING **KICKED OUT** OF THE HOUSE! AND SINCE I CAN'T **AFFORD** TO LIVE **ALONE,** FAILURE IS **NOT** AN OPTION!

BUT JUST PASSING **ISN'T** ENOUGH! CONSISTENTLY **CRAPPY** GRADES CAN **ALSO** GET ME KICKED OUT!

SO I NEED TO SPEND THE SUMMER GETTING MY **SHIT** TOGETHER!

AND SINCE I'M PRETTY DAMN ***SURE*** IAN AND MAX ***SET ME UP*** THE OTHER DAY TO TRY AND MAKE ME ***FAIL***, I CAN ONLY ASSUME THEY'D BE MORE THAN ***HAPPY*** TO SEE ME ***LEAVE*** THE HOUSE ***FOR GOOD!***

SO I'VE ALSO GOT TO DO ***EVERYTHING*** I CAN TO ***KEEP*** THEM FROM PULLING SOMETHING LIKE THAT ***AGAIN!***

Ring

HELLO?

YES... YES IT IS!

YES! I REMEMBER!

OH MY GOD! COULD THIS BE ABOUT THE CLERK POSITION?

IS THIS ROBERT STILLMAN?

THIS IS HAROLD MONROE! WE TALKED THE OTHER DAY AT MY WIFE'S LECTURE!

OH SHIT! WAIT A MINUTE! I WAS DRESSED UP AS A GIRL AND TOLD HIM MY NAME WAS ROBIN! HOW THE HELL...?!

I MEAN... NO! I... I THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE THE WRONG NUMBER, AND...!

RELAX, ROBERT... OR, ROBIN! OR WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL YOURSELF!

ANY SECRETS YOU WANT TO KEEP ARE SAFE WITH ME!

MY WIFE AND I ARE VERY UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTIVE WHEN IT COMES TO TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE LGBTQ PLUS COMMUNITY!

FUCK! HE KNOWS THAT WAS ME! AND TRYING TO DENY IT WILL JUST MAKE IT WORSE!

HOW... HOW DID YOU KNOW HOW TO FIND ME?

I... I WASN'T EXPECTING TO TALK TO ANYONE, SO YOU KIND OF CAUGHT ME OFF GUARD!

WHEN I COULDN'T FIND AN APPLICATION FOR "ROBIN SULLIVAN", I EXPANDED MY SEARCH TO INCLUDE SIMILAR NAMES!

ESPECIALLY ONES THAT STARTED WITH "STIL", SINCE THAT'S WHAT YOU STARTED TO TELL ME THE OTHER DAY WHEN I ASKED FOR YOUR NAME!

I FIGURED AS MUCH!


LOOK, ROBIN... THE REASON I'M CALLING IS TO INVITE YOU IN FOR AN INTERVIEW REGARDING THE CLERK POSITION!
I DO! AND TO BE HONEST, YOU'RE ONE OF MY TOP PICKS SO FAR!
YOU WANT ME TO COME IN? REALLY?
WELL I APPRECIATE THAT, MR. MONROE! BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I SHOULD REALLY CLARIFY BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER!

I... I'LL BE THERE!

YOU CAN TELL ME *TOMORROW* WHEN YOU COME BY AT, SAY...*TWO O'CLOCK?*

*EXCELLENT!* SEE YOU THEN!


JESUS! HE THINKS I'M TRANSGENDER! OF COURSE, I CAN'T REALLY BLAME HIM CONSIDERING HOW I LOOKED THE OTHER DAY!
BUT AS AMAZING AS IT'D BE TO CLERK IN JUDGE MONROE'S OFFICE ALL SUMMER, THEY'VE GOT TO KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT ME BEFORE THEY OFFER ME ANY KIND OF JOB!
I'LL JUST MAKE THAT A PRIORITY AS SOON AS I GET THERE TOMORROW!

*SIGH!* WHICH COULD MAKE IT ONE VERY **SHORT** INTERVIEW!

The next day, a few minutes before two o'clock...

THIS ***INTERVIEW*** HAS TAKEN ON MORE ***SIGNIFICANCE*** THAN I'D ORIGINALLY THOUGHT!

BECAUSE THE MORE I ***THINK*** ABOUT IT THE MORE I ***RECOGNIZE*** THE ***IMPACT*** OF HAVING SOMEONE LIKE ***ROBIN*** WORKING FOR ABBY!

WHEN I FINALLY ***"ACCIDENTALLY"*** LET THE NEWS SLIP IN AUGUST, THE LIBERALS WILL ***LOVE*** IT AND THE CONSERVATIVES WON'T ***DARE*** SAY A ***WORD*** WITHOUT MAKING THEMSELVES LOOK ***BAD!***

AND THE FACT THAT ROBIN HAS JUST ***FALLEN*** INTO OUR LAPS LIKE THIS IS PURE ***PROVIDENCE!***

BUT TO MAKE IT WORK, I NEED TO REMOVE ALL ***HESITATION*** AND ***RELUCTANCE*** FROM HER MIND SO SHE'LL FEEL ***FREE*** TO BE HER ***TRUE SELF*** HERE!

AND I'M ***JUST*** ABOUT TO DISCOVER HOW ***DIFFICULT*** THAT'S GOING TO BE!

Knock knock

COME IN!


MR. MONROE? HI! I'M...
ROBIN! OF COURSE! I WAS EXPECTING YOU!


IT'S ROBERT, ACTUALLY... ROBERT STILLMAN!
I'M VERY MUCH AWARE OF THAT... ROBERT!
BUT I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THIS IS A SAFE SPACE FOR ROBIN AS WELL!
WELL, THAT'S, UMMM... GOOD TO KNOW!

I ***AM*** A LITTLE ***SURPRISED,*** THOUGH, THAT YOU CHOSE TO ATTEND THIS INTERVIEW LIKE ***THIS!***

I'D HAVE ***THOUGHT*** YOU'D WANT TO PRESENT YOURSELF AS THE ***SAME*** PERSON I MET THE OTHER DAY!

YEAH, WELL... ***ABOUT*** THAT...

I MEAN, I UNDERSTAND IF YOU HAVE ***RESERVATIONS*** ABOUT BEING ROBIN IN ***UNFAMILIAR*** SURROUNDINGS! BUT I WANT TO ***ASSURE*** YOU THAT SHE WOULD BE ***MORE*** THAN ***WELCOME*** HERE!

IN FACT, TO BE ***TRUTHFUL***, YOU ***GOT*** THIS INTERVIEW BECAUSE OF ROBIN... ***NOT*** ROBERT!

OH, DON'T GET ME WRONG! I'LL STILL ***CONSIDER*** YOU FOR THE POSITION! BUT IT'S JUST THAT MY WIFE HAS ALWAYS ***PREFERRED*** HIRING YOUNG ***WOMEN*** AS SUMMER CLERKS!

IT'S BEEN ***HER*** WAY OF ENSURING ***EQUITY*** IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION!

WHA... ***WHAT*** DO YOU MEAN?

BUT I'M ***NOT*** A WOMAN! ***YOU*** OBVIOUSLY ***KNEW*** THAT WHEN YOU CALLED ME AND ***ASKED*** ME HERE!

MAYBE NOT A CISWOMAN, BUT A TRANSWOMAN IS JUST AS MUCH A WOMAN AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED!

IT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON! BUT IT DOES PUT AN EXTRA CHECKMARK IN THE POSITIVES COLUMN!

I GET THE FEELING YOU ONLY WANT TO HIRE ME BECAUSE YOU THINK I'M TRANS!

THEN I THINK I'D BETTER TELL YOU THE TRUTH BEFORE THIS GOES ANY FURTHER!

LIKE I SAID BEFORE, ROBIN, IT'S ***SAFE*** TO BE ***YOURSELF*** HERE, AND...

I AM ***NOT*** A TRANSWOMAN!

***NO,*** I'M ***SERIOUS!*** I'M ***NOT*** TRANSGENDERED AND NEVER ***HAVE*** BEEN!

I WAS ***DRESSED*** LIKE THAT THE OTHER DAY BECAUSE I ***THOUGHT*** IT WAS THE ***ONLY*** WAY I COULD GET INTO THE LECTURE!

WHY ON *EARTH* WOULD YOU THINK *THAT?*

THE LIST OF LECTURES I GOT FROM ONE OF MY ROOMMATES STATED YOUR *WIFE'S* LECTURE WAS FOR *WOMEN ONLY!*

IT MOST CERTAINLY *WASN'T!*

AS I FOUND OUT *AFTER* I GOT THERE! BUT IT WAS *TOO LATE* TO GO HOME AND *CHANGE!*

AND I REALLY *NEEDED* TO ATTEND THAT LECTURE!

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN* "NEEDED TO"?

SO YOU **MISREPRESENTED** YOURSELF IN ORDER TO PASS YOUR CLASS, IS **THAT** IT?

I NEEDED TO ATTEND AT LEAST **ONE** LECTURE THIS SEMESTER IN ORDER TO **PASS** A COURSE! AND BY THE TIME I GOT AROUND TO IT, YOUR **WIFE'S** WAS THE **ONLY** ONE **LEFT!**

SO IT WAS EITHER **STAY** FOR THE LECTURE **DRESSED** LIKE I **WAS** OR **FAIL THE COURSE,** WHICH **ALSO** WOULD'VE GOTTEN ME **KICKED OUT** OF MY FRAT!

I'M **SORRY,** MR. MONROE! IT... IT **WASN'T** INTENTIONAL! AT THE TIME, I THOUGHT I HAD **NO CHOICE!** **PLEASE BELIEVE ME!**


SHIT! THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING!
BUT THERE MIGHT STILL BE A WAY TO MAKE THIS WORK OUT!
WELL, I GUESS I HAVE TO COMMEND YOU A LITTLE AT THE LENGTHS YOU WERE WILLING TO GO THROUGH IN ORDER TO PASS YOUR COURSE!
NO ONE WAS HARMED BY YOUR LITTLE MASQUERADE... AT LEAST NOT YET!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

HAS IT OCCURRED TO YOU THAT YOUR FRATERNITY BROTHERS ***SET YOU UP*** TO ***FAIL*** BY ***DOCTORING*** THE LECTURE LIST THEY SHOWED YOU?

*SIGH!* YEAH... IT HAS! BUT SINCE I PASSED THE COURSE, THEIR PLAN ***FAILED!***

***THIS*** TIME! SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THEY ***WON'T*** TRY ***AGAIN?***

I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE ***SURE*** THEY DON'T TRICK ME INTO ***THAT*** KIND OF SITUATION AGAIN!

OH, THEY DON'T ***HAVE*** TO PUT YOU INTO A ***NEW*** SITUATION WHEN THERE'S SO MUCH ***MORE*** THEY COULD GET OUT OF ***THIS*** ONE!

I DON'T SEE HOW!

AT THE VERY **LEAST**, THEY COULD SPREAD THE STORY OF **YOU** ATTENDING THE LECTURE IN **DRAG**, MAKING YOUR SUMMER, IF NOT YOUR **ENTIRE** LAW SCHOOL **CAREER**, UNCOMFORTABLE!

BUT IF THEY WERE **REALLY** SERIOUS ABOUT CAUSING YOU TO FAIL, THEY COULD MAKE SURE YOUR **PROFESSOR** KNOWS ABOUT YOUR **"PRANK"**, WHO MIGHT, IN TURN, **FAIL YOU** FOR **ETHICAL** REASONS!

WHETHER HE WOULD **DO** THAT OR NOT, IT'S HARD TO SAY SINCE I DON'T KNOW HIM! BUT IT'S A DEFINITE **POSSIBILITY!**

I... I HADN'T **THOUGHT** OF THAT!

NORMALLY I WOULDN'T BE ***THAT*** CONCERNED ABOUT A COLLEGE PRANK LIKE ***THIS,*** BUT SINCE IT INVOLVES ***MY WIFE,*** A HIGHLY ***RESPECTED*** ATTORNEY, IT TROUBLES ME ***DEEPLY!***

MAYBE SO! BUT ***SURELY*** YOU REALIZE THAT ANY ***MENTION*** OF HER NAME DURING AN ***ETHICS*** VIOLATION, EVEN JUST FOR A LAW STUDENT, COULD ***DAMAGE*** HER REPUTATION!

THAT WAS ***NEVER*** MY INTENTION, MR. MONROE! PLEASE ***BELIEVE ME!***

I... I ***REALIZE*** THAT NOW AND WISH THERE WAS ***SOMETHING*** I COULD DO TO ***KEEP*** THAT FROM HAPPENING!

MAY I ASK ***WHY*** YOU CONTINUE TO LIVE IN SUCH A ***TOXIC*** ENVIRONMENT?

THEN IT'S ***DOUBLY*** UNFORTUNATE YOU ***AREN'T*** THE PERSON I ***THOUGHT*** YOU WERE!

BECAUSE MY WIFE AND I HAVE A SMALL ***COTTAGE APARTMENT*** ATTACHED TO OUR GARAGE THAT WE LET SUMMER CLERKS LIVE IN FOR ***FREE!***

***"ROBIN"*** NOT ONLY WOULD'VE EARNED A ***REWARDING JOB*** BUT ALSO ***FREE RENT*** FOR THE SUMMER!

IT'S ***ALL*** I CAN AFFORD! THE ***DORMS*** ARE RESERVED FOR UNDERCLASSMEN AND I DON'T HAVE ANY ***FRIENDS*** TO SHARE AN ***APARTMENT*** WITH!

WHY DO YOU SAY ***THAT?***

WOW! THAT'S VERY **GENEROUS** OF THE TWO OF YOU, SIR, AND I **COMPLETELY** UNDERSTAND WHY YOU **CAN'T** OFFER THE JOB TO **ME!**

I'M VERY GLAD WE **AGREE** ON THAT, **ROBERT!**

BUT BEFORE WE **END** YOUR INTERVIEW, LET ME ADD A SLIGHT **WRINKLE** TO THE SITUATION!

YOU SEE, THERE ARE ***SEVERAL*** REASONS WHY I WANTED TO HIRE ***"ROBIN"*** FOR THIS POSITION!

BUT THE ***PRIMARY*** REASON HAS TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT MY WIFE IS BEING CONSIDERED AS A CANDIDATE FOR STATE ***ATTORNEY'S GENERAL!***

WHICH IS WHY ***I'M*** SO ***COMMITTED*** TO GETTING HER ELECTED!

THE ***STATE AG!*** THAT'S ***INCREDIBLE!*** JUDGE MONROE WOULD BE ***AMAZING*** IN THAT POSITION!

BUT HOW DOES HIRING "ROBIN" HELP WITH THAT?

YOU SEE, A ***SIGNIFICANT*** NUMBER OF VOTERS IN THIS STATE ARE VERY ***PRO-LGBTQ PLUS!*** AND ALTHOUGH SHE AND I ARE BOTH VERY ***LIKE-MINDED*** IN THAT REGARD, IT ***ISN'T*** REFLECTED IN HER ***HIRING*** RECORD!

SO HAVING SOMEONE LIKE "ROBIN" ON STAFF, IF ONLY FOR THE SUMMER, WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN ***SWAYING*** THE COMMITTEE!

ACTUALLY ***SHE*** KNOWS ***NOTHING*** ABOUT ***ANY*** OF THIS! ***I*** ONLY KNOW ABOUT THE ***DNC'S*** INTEREST IN HER THROUGH VARIOUS BACK-CHANNELS AND WANT TO ***KEEP*** IT OFF HER PLATE UNTIL THEY ***OFFICIALLY*** ASK HER TO RUN!

SO MEETING "ROBIN" THE OTHER DAY FELT LIKE AN ACT OF ***SERENDIPITY*** THAT WOULD BENEFIT US ALL! ***UNTIL,*** THAT IS, ***TODAY*** WHEN YOU CAME HERE AND TOLD ME THE ***TRUTH!***

ALL OF WHICH ***FORCES*** ME TO ASK ***YOU*** TO CONSIDER ***ACCEPTING*** THIS JOB... AS ***ROBIN!***

SO ***MS. MONROE*** WANTED TO HIRE "ROBIN", TOO?

***WHAT?!***

I... I'M **NOT** A TRANSEXUAL, MR. MONROE! I **THOUGHT** I MADE THAT **CLEAR!**

YOU **DID!** BUT I STILL **CAN'T** GET OVER HOW **CONVINCING** YOU WERE THE OTHER DAY, EVEN IF YOU **WERE** JUST **PRETENDING!**

WHICH **COMPELS** ME TO WONDER **WHY** YOU COULDN'T **CONTINUE** THE PRETENSE FOR THE SUMMER!

BUT I **COULDN'T** HAVE BEEN **THAT** CONVINCING, SINCE **YOU** REALIZED I WAS A MAN ALMOST **IMMEDIATELY!**

THAT WAS **ONLY** BECAUSE YOU **BUMPED** INTO ME AND I **ACCIDENTALLY** BECAME AWARE OF CERTAIN... **INCONSISTENCIES,** AS IT WERE!

OH MY GOD! WHY DIDN'T I TUCK LIKE THE GIRLS TOLD ME TO?

I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, MR. MONROE!

THEN LET ME PUT IT ALL ON THE LINE FOR YOU...

SPENDING THE SUMMER WORKING FOR US AS ROBIN GETS YOU OUT OF THAT HOUSE AND INTO A WELL-PAYING JOB WITH BENEFITS THAT INCLUDE FREE RENT!

I WASN'T GOING TO ANNOUNCE THE HIRING OF A TRANSGENDER PERSON UNTIL THE FALL! AND WHEN I DO, I'LL INSIST ON MAINTAINING YOUR PRIVACY, SO YOUR TRUE IDENTITY NEVER NEED BE KNOWN!

NEEDLESS TO SAY, "ROBIN'S" DEDICATION TO THE JOB WOULD EARN "ROBERT" OUR ENDURING GRATITUDE FOR YEARS TO COME!

I'M... SORRY, MR. MONROE! BUT I THINK ***YOU*** HAVE A LOT MORE ***CONFIDENCE*** IN ME THAN ***I*** DO!

AND BESIDES, ***I*** DON'T THINK MY HOUSEMATES ARE AS BAD AS ***YOU*** THINK THEY ARE!

I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT, ROBERT! I ***REALLY*** DO!


BUT IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS, YOU HAVE MY NUMBER!
THANK YOU, SIR! BUT I REALLY *DON'T* THINK I WILL!


WELL,
SHIT!

A short time later, back at the fraternity house...

THAT *HAD* TO BE THE *WEIRDEST* INTERVIEW I'VE *EVER* HAD IN MY LIFE!

IT WAS THE ***PERFECT*** JOB, TOO! OR AT LEAST ***WOULD'VE*** BEEN IF NOT FOR THAT ***ONE*** LITTLE STIPULATION THAT I PRETEND TO BE A ***WOMAN*** ALL SUMMER!

***MAYBE*** I'M JUST DESPERATE, BUT I THINK THERE WAS A ***MOMENT*** THERE WHERE I ACTUALLY, BUT VERY ***BRIEFLY***, CONSIDERED SAYING ***"YES"***!

BUT THERE'S ***NO WAY IN HELL*** I COULD'VE PULLED IT OFF! ***NEVER!***


WHOA! WHAT ARE YOU ALL DRESSED UP FOR?
I HAD A JOB INTERVIEW!
HATE TO BREAK THIS TO YOU, ROBERTA, BUT YOU DON'T NEED A COAT AND TIE TO INTERVIEW AT THE BARF N' BURGER! *HEH-HEH!*

UH, **YEAH!** I JUST GOT BACK! WHAT'S UP, MAX?

HEY, I'LL DO **WHATEVER** I CAN!

OH **GOOD,** YOU'RE **HERE!**

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO **IMPRESS** A NEW PLEDGE!

HIS FAMILY'S GOT **BIG MONEY** SO SCORING HIM TO THE HOUSE WOULD BE A **HUGE WIN** FOR US!

FINALLY! SOMEONE WHO REALIZES I'M WORTH SOMETHING AROUND HERE!

AWESOME! HE'LL BE HERE IN A COUPLE OF HOURS, SO THAT'LL GIVE YOU PLENTY OF TIME TO GET READY!

GET READY? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU'RE GONNA BE HIS DATE TONIGHT!

C'MON, GUYS! THIS "ROBERTA" SHIT WAS MILDLY AMUSING FOR A WHILE, BUT NOW IT'S REALLY GETTING OLD!

WHAT THE HELL MAKES YOU THINK I'M JOKING, GIRLY? WITH FINALS OVER, ALL THE HOT GIRLS WE KNOW ARE GONE FOR THE SUMMER!

YOU MAY NOT BE A TEN, BUT I'LL BET WITH A LITTLE EXTRA WORK YOU'D BE GOOD ENOUGH TO KEEP THIS KID INTERESTED! HEH-HEH!

YEAH! HEH-HEH!


BUT I CAN'T...
OH, YES YOU CAN! OR WOULD YOU RATHER THE DEAN OF STUDENTS GOT AN ANONYMOUS LETTER DETAILING HOW YOU TRIED TO EMBARRASS A DISTINGUISHED GUEST LECTURER WITH YOUR LITTLE CROSS-DRESSING PRANK!


YOU... YOU CAN'T DO THAT! I COULD GET KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL!
THEN DO AS I SAY AND GET YOUR ASS UPSTAIRS AND MAKE YOURSELF PRETTY FOR THE NEW PLEDGE!


HEY, YOU THINK ANY OF THE OTHER HOUSES MIGHT WANT TO BORROW "ROBERTA" THIS SUMMER?
BORROW? HELL, LET'S RENT HER TO THEM! A NICE LITTLE INFLUX OF SUMMER CASH FOR THE HOUSE!
AWESOME IDEA! HEH-HEH!




click click click


HELLO? MR. MONROE? THIS IS ROBERT... ROBERT STILLWELL!

IS THAT JOB FOR ***ROBIN*** STILL AVAILABLE?

The next day...

SO, WHAT CAUSED YOU TO CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT THE JOB?

IT DIDN'T SEEM TO TAKE YOU VERY LONG TO COME TO THAT CONCLUSION! WHAT HAPPENED?

IT TURNS OUT YOU WERE ***RIGHT*** ABOUT MY HOUSE MATES AND THE ***TOXIC*** ENVIRONMENT I WAS BEING EXPOSED TO!

I'M SO ***SORRY*** TO HEAR THAT, ROBERT! BUT ***WHERE*** DID YOU STAY LAST NIGHT?

I ***WISH*** YOU'D HAVE CALLED! I'D HAVE LET YOU MOVE INTO THE CARRIAGE HOUSE YESTERDAY ***INSTEAD*** OF TODAY!

I'D RATHER NOT GO INTO THE ***DETAILS,*** BUT IT WAS ***ENOUGH*** TO CAUSE ME TO PACK A BAG AND ***LEAVE*** BEFORE THEY'D NOTICE!

KNOWING ***THEM,*** THEY'VE PROBABLY EITHER ***SOLD*** OR ***TOSSED OUT*** EVERYTHING I LEFT BEHIND, WHICH MEANS I'M PRETTY MUCH ***COMMITTED!***

IN MY CAR!

I DIDN'T WANT TO IMPOSE!

WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE NOW! AND WE HAVE A LOT TO DISCUSS!

SHE'S OUT OF TOWN FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS WHICH GIVES US TIME TO GET "ROBIN" IN PLACE BEFORE SHE GETS BACK!

BECAUSE I'VE DECIDED IT BEST TO LEAVE HER IN THE DARK REGARDING THE TRUTH ABOUT "ROBIN"!

I FIGURED AS MUCH! WILL YOUR WIFE BE JOINING US?

WHY IS THAT SO IMPORTANT?

I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

I WASN'T PLANNING ON ***TELLING*** HER THAT "ROBIN" WAS A TRANSGENDER PERSON UNTIL ***AFTER*** YOU'D BEEN WORKING FOR HER AWHILE! A FEW WEEKS , AT ***LEAST!***

THAT'S ***WHY*** YOU NEED TO BE A VERY ***CONVINCING*** "ROBIN" FROM ***DAY ONE!***

AND THE REASON I ***DON'T*** WANT HER TO KNOW THAT YOU REALLY ***AREN'T*** A TRANSGENDER PERSON, IS TO KEEP HER ***FREE*** FROM ***BLAME*** ON THE ***OUTSIDE,*** AND VERY ***UNLIKELY,*** CHANCE THAT THE ***TRUTH*** COMES ***OUT!***

REST ASSURED, I SEE NO ***FEASIBLE*** REASON FOR THAT TO HAPPEN, BUT I HAVEN'T GOTTEN ***WHERE*** I AM IN THE WORLD BY NOT ***PREPARING*** FOR ***EVERY*** POSSIBILITY!

I'M AFRAID SO! AND SINCE YOU'LL BE LIVING IN ***OUR*** CARRIAGE HOUSE, YOU HAVE TO BE "ROBIN" ***24-7!***

SO IF ***YOU*** DON'T THINK YOU CAN ***DO*** THIS, ***NOW'S*** THE TIME TO SAY SO! BECAUSE ONCE MY WIFE GETS ***HOME***, IT WILL BE ***TOO LATE!***

SO ***I'LL*** BE LYING TO HER, TOO! IS ***THAT*** WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

EVEN THOUGH MY INITIAL DECISION WAS ***SPUR*** OF THE MOMENT, I'VE HAD THE CHANCE TO GIVE IT A LOT ***MORE*** THOUGHT SINCE!

AND REGARDLESS OF THE ***UNUSUAL*** SITUATION I'M PUTTING MYSELF IN, I'M ***WILLING*** TO ***COMMIT*** TO ***WHATEVER*** IT TAKES TO MAKE THIS WORK... FOR ***ALL OF US!***

THERE'S ONE ***BIG*** PROBLEM, THOUGH!

THAT'S ***WONDERFUL*** TO HEAR!

WHAT WOULD ***THAT*** BE?

MY **EX-HOUSE MATES!** YOUR HOUSE IS PRETTY **CLOSE** TO CAMPUS, WHICH **INCREASES** THE CHANCE OF ONE OF **THEM** SEEING **ME** AS **ROBIN!**

AND **THAT** COULD RUIN **EVERYTHING!**

ACTUALLY, I **ANTICIPATED** THAT PROBLEM!


AND I BELIEVE I'VE COME UP WITH A SOLUTION!

A few minutes later in the Monroe's carriage house...

SO, ***THIS*** IS WHERE YOU'LL BE STAYING FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS!

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

***OH MY GOD!*** THIS IS SO MUCH NICER THAN ***ANYPLACE*** I'VE ***EVER*** LIVED BEFORE!

THIS IS SO ***GENEROUS*** OF YOU! I DON'T KNOW ***HOW*** TO THANK YOU!

WELL, YOU MIGHT WANT TO HOLD ON AND SEE IF YOU ***STILL*** FEEL THAT WAY AFTER THE ***NEXT*** COUPLE OF DAYS!

BECAUSE YOU HAVE A ***LOT*** OF ***PREP*** WORK TO DO BEFORE MY WIFE GETS HOME TOMORROW!

Knock knock

AND ***THIS*** SHOULD BE THE PERSON WHO'S GOING TO ***HELP*** YOU WITH THAT!

SORRY I'M LATE! FIGURING OUT WHAT TO PACK UP TOOK LONGER THAN I THOUGHT!

YOUR TIMING COULDN'T BE BETTER, HONEY!

PACK UP? ARE... ARE YOU MOVING IN HERE, TOO?

YOU MUST BE ROBERT! AND, NO, I'M NOT MOVING IN HERE! THESE THINGS I PACKED UP ARE FOR YOU!

WELL, MORE SPECIFICALLY, THEY'RE FOR ROBIN!

I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

THIS IS MY NIECE, ***NORA!*** SHE'LL BE HELPING YOU ***DEVELOP*** AND ***MAINTAIN*** "ROBIN" FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS!

***EVERYTHING,*** YES! BUT ***I*** TRUST HER ***COMPLETELY!*** AND ***YOU*** SHOULD, TOO!

SO SHE KNOWS...?

JUST THINK OF ME AS THE ***BEST*** BIG SISTER YOU COULD ***EVER*** HAVE!


WELL, I'LL LET YOU TWO GET ACQUAINTED!
LET ME KNOW IF YOU NEED ANYTHING!
THANKS, UNCLE HANK! WE WILL!

OKAY, THEN! WHY DON'T ***YOU*** GO INTO THE BEDROOM, ***STRIP DOWN*** AND LET ME ***SEE*** WHAT I'VE GOT TO WORK WITH!

YEAH! ***JUST*** LIKE THAT! CHOP CHOP, ***ROBIN!***

***WHAT?! JUST LIKE THAT?***

UNCLE HANK'S LET ME CRASH IN THIS CARRIAGE HOUSE ***MORE*** THAN A ***FEW*** TIMES OVER THE YEARS WHEN MY MOM AND I DIDN'T SEE EYE TO EYE!

THAT'S ***ONE*** OF THE REASON'S WE'RE SO ***CLOSE!***

IF WE'RE GONNA DO THIS ***RIGHT,*** I NEED TO SEE IT ***ALL,*** SWEETIE!

GOOD TO KNOW... REALLY.

NOW WHEN YOU SAY "STRIP DOWN", JUST HOW ***FAR*** ARE WE TALKING HERE?

*SIGH!* GREAT!

THE GIRLS WHO DRESSED ME THE OTHER DAY HAD ME SHAVE ***ALL OVER!*** IT JUST ***HASN'T*** GROWN ***BACK*** YET!

WHAT ***LITTLE*** BEARD I HAD TOOK ME SEVERAL ***MONTHS*** TO GROW! SO, ***YEAH...*** I'M ***NOT*** A VERY ***HAIRY*** PERSON!

HMMM... ***NICE*** SKIN! ARE YOU ***NATURALLY*** THIS BODY HAIR ***FREE?***

AND YOUR ***FACIAL*** HAIR?

***LUCKY*** FOR US!

IT **IS** IF I'M TO KNOW **WHERE** I NEED TO **PAD** OR NOT!

SO **RELAX** AND GET USED TO IT, **GIRLFRIEND!** THERE'LL BE A LOT **MORE** OF THIS IN THE COMING DAYS!

HEY, THE **VISUAL** INSPECTION IS EMBARRASSING ENOUGH! BUT IS **HANDLING** THE GOODS REALLY **NECESSARY?**

**WONDERFUL!** JUST **FUCKING** WONDERFUL!

LOOK! I'M NOT YOUR ENEMY! I KNOW THIS IS UNCOMFORTABLE FOR YOU AND I WISH WE HAD MORE TIME SO I COULD EASE YOU INTO IT! BUT WE DON'T!

TO KEEP YOU FROM BEING RECOGNIZED BY ANYONE, I HAVE TO CREATE A WHOLE NEW GIRL OUT OF YOU AND THAT'S GONNA TAKE SOME WORK!

SO PLEASE, JUST BEAR WITH ME FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS AND DO EVERYTHING I SAY! THEN, WHEN THINGS CALM DOWN A BIT, WE'LL TAKE SOME TIME TO GET TOKNOW EACH OTHER BETTER!

AND HOPEFULLY YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M NOT THE HEINOUS BITCH YOU THINK I AM!

*SIGH!* I **DON'T** THINK YOU'RE A HEINOUS BITCH! I'M **JUST** BEING A **JERK** BECAUSE I'M OVERLY **STRESSED** RIGHT NOW!

I **KNOW** I AGREED TO ALL THIS, BUT THE SUDDEN **URGENCY** OF IT IS REALLY **MESSING** WITH MY EMOTIONS!

SO, **I'M SORRY,** NORA, AND I **PROMISE** I'LL STOP SNAPPING AT YOU... JUST AS **SOON** AS YOU LET ME PUT SOME DAMN **CLOTHES** BACK ON!


NO APOLOGIES NECESSARY! AND AS SOON AS I TAKE A FEW MEASUREMENTS, YOU CAN SLIP INTO THOSE CLOTHES I BROUGHT FOR YOU!
THE CLOTHES I BROUGHT ARE JUST TEMPORARY UNTIL WE GET TO WHERE I CAN GET YOU FITTED FOR BODY SHAPERS AND YOUR REAL CLOTHES!
THEY'RE WHY I NEED YOUR MEASUREMENTS!
WHY DO YOU NEED MY MEASUREMENTS IF YOU ALREADY BROUGHT CLOTHES?
I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE!

SO JUST **RELAX!** THE **SOONER** I GET THIS DONE, THE SOONER WE'RE **OUT** OF HERE!

OOPS, **SORRY!** HAND SLIPPED!

YEAH, I DON'T THINK **"RELAXING"** IS ANYTHING **I'LL** BE DOING MUCH OF FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS!

***GASP!***

A short time later...

WHY DOES EVERYONE KEEP PUTTING ME IN ***SKIRTS?*** WOMEN WEAR ***PANTS*** TOO, YOU KNOW!

TRUE! BUT AS ***CUTE*** AS YOUR ASS IS FOR A ***GUY,*** IT NEEDS SOME ***WORK*** BEFORE I'D WANT TO SEE IT SQUEEZED INTO A PAIR OF SKINNY JEANS OR TIGHTS!

BESIDES, YOU'VE ***ALREADY*** GOT ***DYNAMITE*** LEGS! SO WHY NOT SHOW 'EM OFF?

EVEN WITH *"DYNAMITE"* LEGS, I DON'T THINK ANYONE WHO TOOK A *CLOSE* LOOK AT ME IN *THIS* GET-UP WOULD THINK I WAS *REALLY* A WOMAN!

*TRUE!* BUT IN A MERE *FIFTEEN MINUTES* I MADE SURE *NO ONE* WOULD RECOGNIZE YOU, AND *THAT* WAS THE POINT!

GIVE ME A COUPLE OF HOURS AND THE *PROPER* RESOURCES AND *YOU'LL* SEE WHAT I CAN *REALLY* DO!

SO, I **HAVE** TO ASK! IS THIS SOMETHING YOU DO **A LOT?**

DEFINE **"THIS"!**

MAKING **GUYS** LOOK LIKE **GIRLS!**

NOT **SPECIFICALLY!** BUT I **AM** SOMETHING OF AN **EXPERT** IN **SFX** MAKEUP!

WHAT THE HELL DOES **THAT** MEAN?

I'M A **MAKE-UP** AND **SPECIAL EFFECTS** ARTIST!


I'VE DONE A FEW! BUT WORKING IN LIVE THEATER IS MY MAIN GIG!
A FEW YEARS! I STUDIED THEATER AND ACTING IN COLLEGE, BUT REALIZED PRETTY QUICKLY THAT ACTING DOESN'T PAY THE BILLS!
SO I BECAME REALLY GOOD AT SOMETHING THAT'D KEEP ME IN THE BUSINESS AND PROVIDED A CONSTANT PAYCHECK!
PRETTY DAMN GOOD... AS YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT!
WAIT! YOU WORK IN THE MOVIES?
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING IT?
JUST HOW GOOD?


SO THIS IS WHERE YOU WORK?
MOST OF THE TIME!
LET ME GET THE LIGHTS SO YOU CAN SEE IT BETTER!

WOW! WHERE EXACTLY ARE WE?

BACKSTAGE OF THE ORPHEUS THEATRE!

I'M THE RESIDENT MAKEUP ARTIST FOR THE THEATRE BUT ALSO DO A LOT OF FREELANCE WORK FROM HERE!

IT'S QUITE THE SETUP!

DAMN STRAIGHT! AND IT'S GOT EVERYTHING I'LL NEED TO MAKE A NEW WOMAN OUT OF YOU!

*SIGH!* YEAH. SO... WHEN DO WE GET STARTED?

TAKE OFF ***EVERYTHING? AGAIN?***

***RIGHT NOW!*** GO INTO ONE OF THOSE CHANGING BOOTHS AND TAKE OFF THOSE CLOTHES!

YES, BUT DON'T WORRY! I'LL BRING YOU A ROBE YOU CAN THROW ON ***BEFORE*** YOU COME OUT!

IT'S JUST ***SURREAL*** HOW ***CALMLY*** I'M ACCEPTING ALL THIS! BUT I GUESS THAT'S A ***GOOD*** THING SINCE THE ALTERNATIVE IS ***FREAKING OUT!***

AND THAT'S ***NOT*** AN OPTION IF I WANT TO ***KEEP*** THIS JOB ***AND*** PLACE TO LIVE FOR THE SUMMER!

I SUPPOSE I'M ***LUCKY*** TO HAVE A ***PROFESSIONAL*** LIKE NORA HELP ME PULL THIS OFF! I JUST WISH IT ALL ***WASN'T*** HAPPENING SO GODDAMN ***FAST!***


HERE YOU GO! PUT THESE ON BEFORE YOU COME OUT!
NO, THEY'RE NOT! BUT THEY ARE SOMETHING YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET USED TO WEARING... FOR A WHILE AT LEAST!
HEY! NEITHER OF THOSE IS A ROBE!


YOU KNOW, CONSIDERING WHAT THEY MADE ME WEAR A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO, THIS ISN'T THAT BAD!
YEAH... THAT'S BECAUSE I HAVEN'T TIGHTENED IT UP YET!
TAKE A DEEP BREATH!


HOLY...
SHIT!

YOU'LL GET **USED** TO IT! JUST **AVOID** TRYING TO TAKE **DEEP** BREATHS FOR A WHILE!

THEY'RE **CALLED** BODY-SHAPERS FOR A **REASON!**

BESIDES SQUEEZING THAT **BABY FAT** OF YOURS INTO SOME **RESPECTABLE** CLEAVAGE, **THIS** LITTLE BEAUTY WILL ALSO START **TRAINING** YOUR WAIST INTO A MORE **FEMININE** SHAPE!

**JESUS!** I CAN BARELY **BREATH!**

I **FEEL** LIKE I'M BEING **CRUSHED!**

AND THE ***PADDING*** IN THESE SHORTS WILL GIVE YOU AN ***ASS*** TO RIVAL ***MINE!*** *GIGGLE!*

NOW, TAKE OFF THAT WIG, SLIP ON A ROBE AND FOLLOW ME! WE'RE GONNA WORK ON YOUR ***HAIR*** FIRST!

SO **WHAT** ARE YOU GOING TO **DO** TO MY HAIR?

COULDN'T WE JUST DO ANOTHER **WIG**... LIKE THE ONE I WORE HERE?

THE **REAL** QUESTION IS WHAT AM I **NOT** GOING TO DO TO YOUR HAIR?

BESIDES THE BODY, A WOMAN'S **HAIR** IS THE MOST **NOTICEABLE** ATTRIBUTE SHE HAS!

SO TO **KEEP** YOU FROM BEING RECOGNIZED, THIS **SHORT, BLACK HAIR** OF YOURS HAS **GOT** TO **GO!**

TOO **TEMPORARY** AND **FALLIBLE!** IF THIS IS GOING TO LAST **ALL SUMMER,** WE NEED SOMETHING MORE **PERMANENT!**

DO **I** GET ANY SAY IN THIS?

***NOPE!*** JUST GET COMFORTABLE AND ***TUNE OUT*** WHILE I WORK MY MAGIC, SWEETIE! ***THIS*** IS GOING TO ***TAKE*** A WHILE!

*SIGH!* ALL RIGHT.

NOT LIKE I HAVE ANY CHOICE.

A couple of hours later...

WAKEY, WAKEY, SUNSHINE! NO TIME TO DAWDLE!

HUH? WHAT?

A COUPLE OF HOURS!

***NOT*** UNTIL IT'S DONE SETTING! DID YOU BRING YOUR ***CONTACTS?***

WELL, CONSIDER THEM SOMETHING ***ELSE*** YOU'LL JUST ***HAVE*** TO GET USED TO!

PUT 'EM IN AND THEN WE'LL GO WORK ON YOUR ***FACE!***

HOW ***LONG*** HAVE I BEEN ASLEEP?

WHAT DID YOU ***DO?*** CAN I ***SEE*** IT?

YEAH, BUT LIKE I SAID, I DON'T REALLY ***LIKE*** WEARING THEM IF I DON'T ***HAVE*** TO!

IS **THIS** GOING TO TAKE AS LONG AS MY HAIR DID?

NO! BUT IT **WILL** TAKE LONGER THAN NORMAL THIS **FIRST** TIME IF I'M TO GET THAT **FOREST** OF EYEBROWS DOWN TO THE SHAPE I WANT!

BY THE WAY, HOW ARE YOU IN DEALING WITH ***PAIN?***

WHAT I HAVE PLANNED INVOLVES PLUCKING, POKING, STICKING ***AND*** PIERCING!

BEAUTY CAN BE A LITTLE ***PAINFUL,*** SWEETIE! YOU READY?

I'M OKAY UNTIL THE ***CHAINSAWS*** COME OUT! SHOULD I ASK ***WHY?***

*SIGH!* I KIND OF ***ASSUMED*** AS MUCH!

AS READY AS I'LL EVER BE!

A while later...

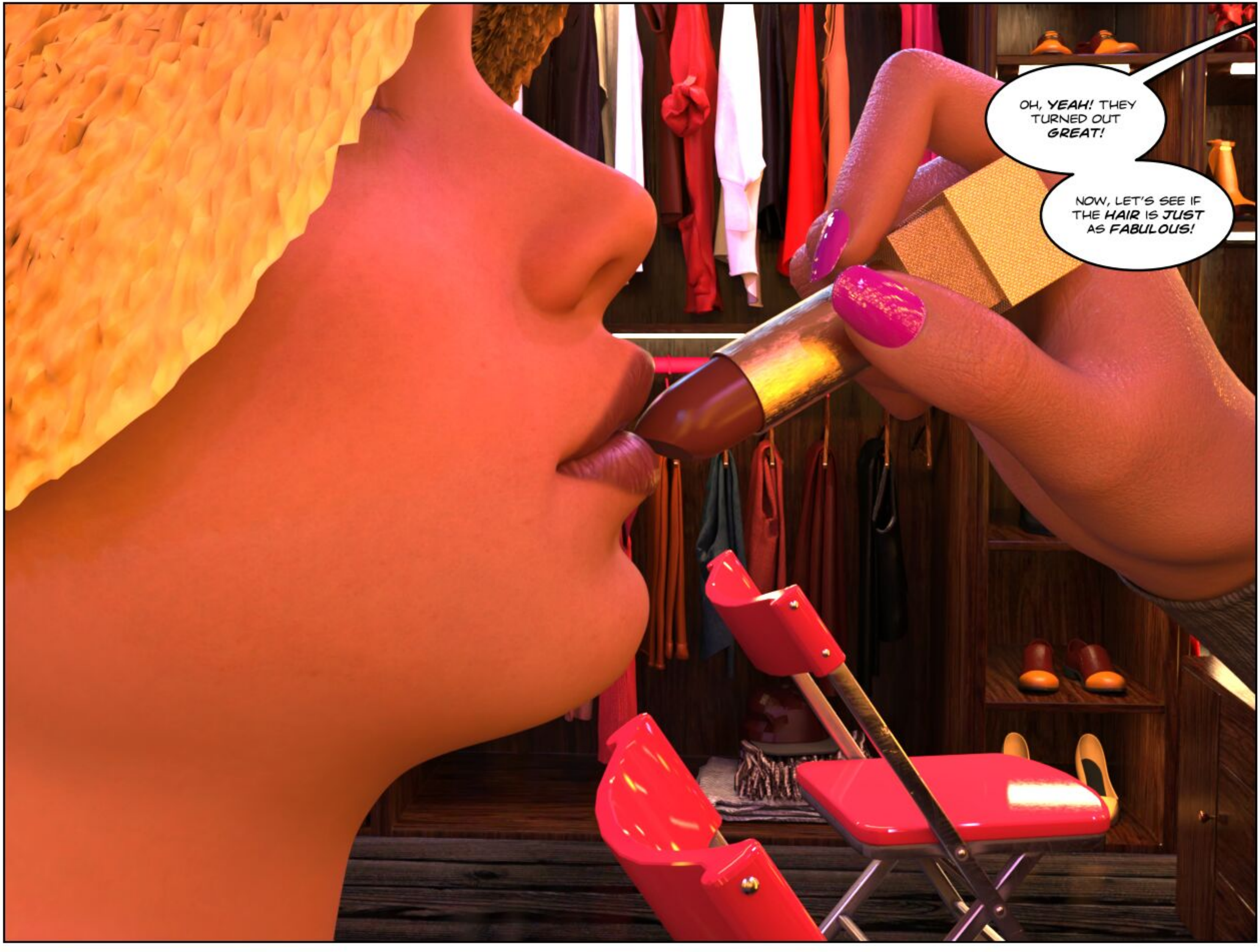
NO, THE ICE **REALLY** HELPED! BUT THEY **STILL** FEEL REALLY **PUFFY!**

**NOT** LONGER WOULD BE PREFERABLE!

HOW ARE THE **LIPS** FEELING? DO THEY STILL **HURT?**

THAT'S **NORMAL** FOR THE AMOUNT OF **GEL** I INJECTED! BUT THEY LOOK **GREAT** AND **SHOULD** LAST ALL SUMMER, IF NOT **LONGER!**

NOT MUCH I CAN DO ABOUT **THAT!** SORRY!


OH, YEAH! THEY TURNED OUT GREAT!
NOW, LET'S SEE IF THE HAIR IS JUST AS FABULOUS!

IT'S **AMAZING** WHAT A LITTLE **COLOR** AND SOME **EXTENSIONS** CAN DO!

WHAT DO **YOU** THINK?

*HOLY SHIT!*

THAT...*THAT* LOOKS *NOTHING* LIKE ME!

AND I'M ACTUALLY... *CUTE!*

THAT WAS *KINDA* THE *POINT!*

*PUPPIES* ARE *CUTE*, ROBIN! I MADE *YOU* INTO A *KNOCKOUT!*

I *NEVER* IN A *MILLION YEARS* IMAGINED YOU COULD GET *ME* TO LOOK *THIS* CONVINCING!

AS BACKHANDED *COMPLIMENTS* GO, I'LL *TAKE* IT!

BUT AS FAR AS *CONVINCING* GOES, *THAT'S* GOING TO BE UP TO *YOU!*

AND THAT'S WHERE MY *OTHER* TALENTS WILL COME IN HANDY!

*WHAT* OTHER TALENTS?

*ACTING!*

LOOKING THE PART IS EASY! BUT MAKING IT BELIEVABLE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT BALLGAME!

EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE EVENTUALLY GOING TO BE "OUTED" AS A TRANSWOMAN, UNCLE HANK SAYS IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT YOU PRESENT YOURSELF AS A NORMAL, EVERYDAY WOMAN!

ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU'LL BE WORKING FOR MY AUNT ABBY, AN EXTREMELY INTELLIGENT AND OBSERVANT PERSON WHO WON'T BE TOLD THE "TRUTH" ABOUT YOU FOR SEVERAL WEEKS!

SO MY OTHER JOB IS NOT ONLY TO HELP YOU ACT THE PART, BUT LIVE THE PART!

I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE!

SO... WHEN DO WE START?

AS SOON AS I FIND *JUST* THE RIGHT OUTFIT FOR *ROBIN'S DEBUT!*

Later...

ARE YOU **SURE** YOU KNOW **WHERE** THIS PLACE IS? IT **FEELS** LIKE WE'VE BEEN WALKING **FOREVER!**

THEN **WHY** DID YOU HAVE THE DRIVER DROP US OFF SO **DAMN FAR AWAY?**

OF **COURSE** I KNOW WHERE IT IS! I MEET MY GIRLS HERE **ALL THE TIME!**

TO GIVE **YOU** EVEN **MORE** TIME TO GET YOUR **WALK** DOWN IN THOSE HEELS!

MORE LIKELY THEY'VE BEEN LOOKING AT MY PADDED **ASS** IN THIS **WAY TOO SHORT** SKIRT!

DID WE **REALLY** HAVE TO GO THIS ROUTE ON MY VERY **FIRST** DAY?

NOT THE **BEST** ANALOGY SINCE I NEVER **LEARNED** HOW TO **SWIM!**

AND FROM THE **LOOKS** YOU'VE BEEN GETTING, **I'D** SAY YOU'RE **NAILING** IT!

CONSIDERING OUR TIME-FRAME, THROWING YOU INTO THE **DEEP END** IS REALLY THE **ONLY CHOICE** WE HAVE!

I **WOULDN'T** DO THAT TO YOU! IT'S JUST A **LAIDBACK** PLACE MY GIRLFRIENDS AND I MEET UP AT WHENEVER WE CAN!

IT'S **HARDLY** A "MICRO" SKIRT AND THE HEELS **COULD** BE HIGHER... TRUST ME!

BUT YOU'VE **GOT** TO STOP **KVETCHING** ABOUT THE CLOTHES **BEFORE** WE GET THERE!

AND **PLEASE** TELL ME THIS PLACE YOU'RE TAKING ME TO **ISN'T** SOME **MEAT MARKET** WHERE **VISION-IMPAIRED** GUYS MIGHT TRY TO **HIT** ON ME!

THEN **WHY** THE **MICRO** SKIRT AND **DEATH** HEELS?

YOU SEE, AS FAR AS MY **FRIENDS** KNOW, YOU'RE JUST A **NORMAL** FEMALE LAW STUDENT WHO'S GOING TO WORK FOR MY AUNT!

SO AS A FAVOR TO HER, **I** OFFERED TO TAKE YOU **UNDER MY WING** FOR THE SUMMER AND LET YOU HANG OUT WITH ME AND MY FRIENDS!

AND IF **YOU'RE** GOING TO SOCIALIZE WITH **US,** YOU HAVE TO **DRESS THE PART!** HENCE, THE **SHORT SKIRT** AND **HIGH HEELS** YOU'RE GOING TO **LEARN** TO **LOVE!**

OH, **WE ARE!**

YOU MAKE IT **SOUND** LIKE WE'RE GOING TO BE DOING THIS **A LOT!**

WHAT YOU ***NEED*** IS A ***CRASH COURSE*** IN BEING A WOMAN, AND THERE'S NO ***BETTER*** WAY THAN ***IMMERSING*** YOURSELF AMONG THEM!

SO, A GIRLS' NIGHT OUT WITH ***ME*** AND MY ***BESTIES*** IS ***EXACTLY*** WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED!

YOU HAVE TO ***USE*** THIS TIME TO OBSERVE HOW ***WE***, AND ***OTHER*** WOMEN, INTERACT, MOVE, AND ***EXPRESS*** OURSELVES!

SOAK IT ALL IN - ***EVERY*** MANNERISM, ***EVERY*** NUANCE - TO HELP YOU ***TRULY*** DEFINE ***WHO*** ROBIN IS!

IT ***WILL*** BE IF YOU ***COMMIT*** TO IT!

DO YOU ***REALLY*** THINK THAT'LL BE ***ENOUGH*** TO CONVINCE PEOPLE THAT ***I'M*** A ***REAL*** WOMAN?

***DEFINE*** "COMMIT"!

YOU ***CAN'T*** TREAT THIS AS A ROLE YOU PLAY ***ONLY*** WHEN ***CERTAIN*** PEOPLE ARE AROUND! YOU HAVE TO ***LIVE*** IT ***24-7!***

IN ***OTHER*** WORDS, THE MORE ***YOU*** FULLY ***EMBRACE*** BEING ROBIN, THE ***EASIER*** IT WILL BE TO CONVINCE ***OTHERS!***

LOOK, TONIGHT'S ABOUT GETTING ***COMFORTABLE*** WITH YOURSELF! YOU'RE THE ***NEW GIRL*** IN THE GROUP, SO NO ONE HAS ANY ***PRECONCEIVED*** NOTIONS ABOUT YOU!

YOUR VOICE ***STILL*** NEEDS A ***LITTLE*** WORK, BUT THE BACKGROUND NOISE IN THE PLACE WE'RE GOING TO ***SHOULD*** KEEP ANYONE FROM NOTICING!

SO JUST TAKE IT ***SLOW*** AND ***EASY!*** WE'LL BE DOING THIS ***A LOT,*** SO YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ***ADD*** TO YOUR CHARACTER AS YOU ***LOOSEN UP!***

SO, ***TOTAL*** CHANGE IN MINDSET! GOT IT! ***NO PROBLEM!***


WHEN YOU SAY WE'LL BE DOING THIS A LOT, YOU MEAN...
WHAT KIND OF ERRANDS?
I MEAN WE'LL BE GOING OUT WITH THE GIRLS EVERY NIGHT THIS WEEK... FOR THE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS!
PLUS, WE HAVE A FEW ERRANDS TO RUN TOMORROW MORNING BEFORE YOU MEET AUNT ABBY IN THE AFTERNOON!
WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT LATER...

'CAUSE, *HERE* WE ARE!

OF *COURSE* IT IS! I WOULDN'T *LIE* TO YOU! *REMEMBER* THAT!

I GUESS IT *IS* A PRETTY *LAID BACK* LOOKING PLACE!

I TAKE IT THOSE ARE YOUR FRIENDS WAVING AT US!

YEP! THAT'S ***LIZ*** ON THE LEFT AND ***DESI*** ON THE RIGHT!

I'VE KNOWN THESE TWO FOR **YEARS** AND THEY'RE BOTH **AWESOME** PEOPLE!

SO JUST **RELAX** AND LET YOURSELF **ENJOY** THE EVENING!

*SIGH!* I'LL DO MY BEST!

EASIER **SAID** THAN **DONE!**


LIZ... DESI... THIS IS MY NEW FRIEND, ROBIN!
ROBIN, THESE ARE MY BEST FRIENDS... LIZ AND DESI!
IT'S, UMMM... NICE TO MEET YOU GUYS!
AWESOME MEETING YOU, TOO, ROBIN!
DITTO! LET'S GO GRAB A TABLE!
FRUIT JUICE

As the evening progresses, new friendships develop...


SO ROBIN, NORA SAYS YOU MOVED HERE FROM THE MIDWEST! WHAT *PART?*
I *THOUGHT* I DETECTED A BIT OF THAT *NORTHERN MIDWEST ACCENT* IN YOUR VOICE!
*DON'T YOU DARE! I* THINK IT'S *ADORABLE!*
ME TOO!
THE *CHICAGO* AREA! I GREW UP AND DID MY UNDERGRAD WORK THERE!
*YEAH,* I'VE BEEN, UHHH... *TRYING* TO GET *RID* OF IT!

WELL IF **YOU TWO** APPROVE OF IT, **I'D** BE A **FOOL** TO TRY AND CHANGE IT! *GIGGLE!*

SMART GIRL! *GIGGLE!*

SMART? HELL, SHE'S **BRILLIANT!** *GIGGLE!*

I *HATE* TO DO THIS, BUT *ROBIN* AND I HAVE A *LOT* TO DO TOMORROW BEFORE SHE STARTS HER NEW JOB! SO WE'VE GOTTA CALL IT A NIGHT!

YEAH, I'VE GOT AN EARLY DAY TOMORROW MYSELF!

ME TOO! BUT WE'RE MEETING UP AGAIN *TOMORROW* NIGHT, RIGHT?

*HELL YES!*


SEE YOU BOTH TOMORROW NIGHT THEN!
YEAH, AND WELCOME TO THE GANG, ROBIN! *GIGGLE!*
THANK YOU BOTH... SO MUCH!

SO... DID I DO OKAY?

WHEW! THAT'S A *HUGE* RELIEF!

*OKAY?* GIRLFRIEND, *YOU* KNOCKED IT *OUT* OF THE *PARK!*

*CONGRATULATIONS!* YOU'RE *OFFICIALLY* ONE OF THE *GIRLS* NOW!

SO, WHAT ARE ALL THESE IMPORTANT *"ERRANDS"* WE HAVE TO RUN TOMORROW?

AND WHAT WOULD *THAT* BE?

YOU *CAN'T* BE *SERIOUS!*

THERE'S REALLY ONLY *ONE!* BUT IT'S SOMETHING UNCLE HANK *STRONGLY* SUGGESTED!

AN APPOINTMENT WITH A *DOCTOR...* SPECIFICALLY A *GENDER-AFFIRMING SPECIALIST!*

OH, *I AM!*

THAT'S THE PLAN!

SHIT!

**SOMETIME** THIS SUMMER, YOU AND UNCLE HANK WILL **REVEAL** TO MY AUNT THAT YOU'RE A TRANSWOMAN! **RIGHT?**

**ONE** THING **YOU** NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MY AUNT IS THAT SHE CARES **VERY DEEPLY** FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND HER!

ONCE YOU TELL HER ABOUT YOURSELF, SHE'LL WANT TO GET **NVOLVED!** AT THE VERY **LEAST,** SHE'LL WANT TO MAKE SURE **YOU** HAVE THE VERY **BEST** MEDICAL CARE!

EXACTLY!

BUT I'M **NOT** ACTUALLY **TRANSITIONING!** THE DOCTOR WILL **NOTICE** THAT **IMMEDIATELY!**

**TRUE!** BUT CONSIDERING **HOW** I **LOOK,** HE'LL ASSUME I **PROBABLY** WANT TO **START!**

AND FROM WHAT I'VE READ UP ON, **THAT** REQUIRES **LIVING** AS A WOMAN FOR AT LEAST A **YEAR** ALONG WITH A **MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION!**

SEEING A **MEDICAL** DOCTOR IS **ONE** THING, BUT THERE'S **NO WAY** IN **HELL** I COULD GET PAST A **PSYCHOLOGICAL** EXAM!

YOU DON'T **HAVE** TO BE **ACTIVELY** TRANSITIONING TO SEE A GENDER SPECIALIST!

ACTUALLY, UNCLE HANK SAYS HE'S GOT ***THAT*** PART TAKEN ***CARE*** OF!

FROM WHAT HE TELLS ME, THERE ARE ***ALREADY*** RECORDS OF ***YOU*** LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR THE PAST YEAR ***WHILE*** UNDER THE CARE OF A ***PSYCHOLOGIST!***

HOW THE ***HELL*** DID HE MANAGE ***THAT?!***

I DON'T KNOW! BUT HE'LL ***PROBABLY*** TELL US THE DETAILS AS ***SOON*** AS WE GET YOU HOME!


SHIT! THIS IS STARTING TO GET OUT OF HAND!

A short time later...

SORRY, ROBIN! BUT THIS CAN'T WAIT UNTIL MORNING!

YOU SURE WE HAVE TO STOP HERE FIRST? IT'S KIND OF LATE!

WOW! YOU'VE REALLY OUTDONE YOURSELF, NORA! EXCELLENT JOB!

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS HOPING TO HEAR!

THANKS, UNCLE HANK! BUT ROBIN DESERVES A LOT OF THE CREDIT, TOO! SHE REALLY STEPPED UP AND GOT INTO CHARACTER TONIGHT!


I'M GOING TO TAKE OFF AND LET YOU TWO TALK!
YOU DID AWESOME TODAY, ROBIN! AND I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!
THANKS, NORA! SEE YOU TOMORROW!

I TAKE IT NORA TOLD YOU ABOUT YOUR ***APPOINTMENT*** TOMORROW MORNING?

AND ***YOU*** HAVE ***QUESTIONS!***

THEN LET ME EXPLAIN!

***YES,*** SHE ***DID!***

***OH,*** ***YEAH!***

SINCE YOU CALLED AND ACCEPTED MY OFFER YESTERDAY, I'VE BEEN BUSY ***CREATING*** AN OFFICIAL ***IDENTITY*** FOR ***ROBIN SULLIVAN!***

I HAVE ***FRIENDS*** WITH THE FBI'S ***WITNESS PROTECTION AGENCY!*** WITH A PICTURE AND A FEW RELATIVELY VAGUE PARAMETERS, THEY CAN EASILY ***CREATE*** THE NEEDED DOCUMENTS!

***EXACTLY!*** WHAT WE HAVE TO DO ***NOW*** IS FILL IN THE ***DETAILS!***

YOU CAN ***DO*** THAT?

***THAT'S*** WHY NORA ***INSISTED*** ON TAKING THAT HEADSHOT OF ME ***BEFORE*** WE WENT OUT TONIGHT!

AND, FOR **OUR** PURPOSES, ONE **MAJOR** DETAIL IS ESTABLISHING ROBIN'S **GENDER IDENTITY ISSUES!**

WHICH NEEDS TO INCLUDE A PROFESSIONAL **EVALUATION** AS WELL AS **EVIDENCE** THAT YOU'VE BEEN **LIVING** AS A WOMAN FOR A **SIGNIFICANT** AMOUNT OF TIME!

YOU **WILL** BY TOMORROW! THE **FBI** IS **VERY** GOOD AT WHAT THEY DO! ALL THEY NEED IS SOME **DETAILS** FROM **YOU!**

**YOU'RE** THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO **MEMORIZE** ROBIN'S BACKGROUND, SO IT'S ONLY **NATURAL** THAT **YOU** SHOULD BE THE ONE TO **CREATE** IT!

**NEITHER** OF WHICH I **HAVE!**

FROM **ME?** **WHY** FROM **ME?**

THE DOCTOR YOU'RE SEEING TOMORROW IS EXPECTING YOUR FILE ***BEFORE*** YOUR APPOINTMENT! SO ***YOU*** NEED TO SPEND THE ***NEXT*** FEW HOURS ***CREATING*** ROBIN'S STORY SO ***I*** CAN SEND IT OFF TO MY FRIENDS, WHERE ***THEY'LL*** PUT IT ALL TOGETHER AND ***FORWARD*** IT ON TO YOUR ***NEW DOCTOR!***

I ***STRONGLY*** SUGGEST BASING ***ROBIN'S*** HISTORY ON ***YOUR OWN,*** WITH AS FEW "CORRECTIONS" AS POSSIBLE! THAT ***SHOULD*** MAKE IT MUCH ***EASIER*** FOR YOU TO REMEMBER!

BUT IT ALSO ***HAS*** TO BE ***BELIEVABLE!*** SO YOU NEED TO GIVE SOME ***SERIOUS*** THOUGHT AS TO ***WHO*** YOU WILL ***BE*** THIS SUMMER! OR AT ***LEAST*** SOMEONE YOU CAN ***TRY*** TO BE!

I KNOW IT'S A **LOT** TO ASK OF YOU, BUT THIS IS AN **EXTRAORDINARY** SITUATION AND WE HAVE A VERY **SHORT WINDOW** IN WHICH TO SET IT UP!

SO AS **SOON** AS YOU GET IT DONE, **EMAIL** IT TO ME AND **I'LL** GET THE BALL ROLLING!

*SIGH!* YEAH... I **GET** THAT!

I'LL... DO MY BEST!


Almost two hours later...

"TAKE A COUPLE OF HOURS AND CREATE ROBIN'S STORY", HE SAID! **RIGHT!** MAYBE IF I HAD A COUPLE OF **DAYS!**

I'VE **NEVER** WORKED WELL UNDER PRESSURE... **ESPECIALLY** WHEN IT'S SOMETHING **THIS** IMPORTANT!

MY SUMMER JOB **DEPENDS** ON THIS! AND **WITHOUT** THIS JOB I **WON'T** BE ABLE TO FINISH **LAW SCHOOL!**

SO, YEAH... **NO PRESSURE!**

THIS MIGHT **ALSO** BE A LITTLE **EASIER** IF I **DIDN'T** HAVE TO KEEP WEARING THIS GODDAMN **VISE** AROUND MY WAIST!

BUT NORA **INSISTS** THAT THE **MORE** I WEAR IT **NOW,** THE **LESS** I'LL HAVE TO WEAR IT **LATER!**

AND AS FAR AS **I'M** CONCERNED, THE SOONER **THAT** HAPPENS, THE **BETTER!**


WHICH BRINGS UP QUESTIONS I'M SURE THE DOCTOR'S GOING TO ASK ONCE HE OR SHE EXAMINES ME TOMORROW!
IF I'VE BEEN LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR AT LEAST A YEAR, WHY AM I JUST NOW STARTING TO WEAR BODY-SHAPERS?
AND WHY HAVEN'T I STARTED TAKING HORMONES YET?
SHIT! I SHOULD SMACK MYSELF FOR NOT DOING MORE RESEARCH BEFORE AGREEING TO ALL THIS!
BUT AT THE TIME, I REALLY DIDN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE... AND I STILL DON'T!

OKAY, ***FIRST*** THINGS ***FIRST!*** I NEED TO CREATE A BRIEF OUTLINE OF *"ROBIN'S"* LIFE AND SEND IT TO MR. MONROE!

FOR NOW, I'LL JUST TAKE HIS ADVICE AND USE MY ***OWN*** LIFE EXPERIENCES AND ***TWEAK*** THEM TO FIT THE NEEDED NARRATIVE!

THEN, I'VE GOT TO DO A ***SHIT*** LOAD OF RESEARCH ON ***GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE!***

I NEED TO KNOW ***EVERYTHING*** ABOUT THE STEPS *"I'VE"* TAKEN SO FAR AND THE OPTIONS I'M ***SURE*** THE ***DOCTOR*** WILL PRESENT TO ME ***TOMORROW!***


AND AT SOME POINT, I NEED TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER WHAT I'M WILLING TO GO THROUGH TO MAKE THIS WORK!

The next morning...

YOU **SURE** YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME UP THERE **WITH** YOU?

WELL I'M **SURE** YOU'LL DO **GREAT!**

YOU'VE DONE **MORE** THAN ENOUGH FOR ME THESE LAST 24 HOURS! I NEED TO PROVE TO **MYSELF** THAT I CAN HOLD MY OWN **ALONE** BEFORE I MEET YOUR **AUNT** LATER TODAY!

AND THIS **APPOINTMENT** WITH THE DOCTOR IS MY **ONLY** CHANCE TO DO THAT!

SO, **THANKS** FOR THE OFFER, BUT IT'S TIME FOR **ME** TO TAKE MY FIRST**SOLO** FLIGHT!

JUST AS LONG AS I DON'T **HYPERVENTILATE** FROM A COMBINATION OF **NERVES** AND THIS **CORSET!**

SO, DO YOU WANT TO GO OVER YOUR STORY ***ONE MORE*** TIME OR DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE IT ***MEMORIZED?***

I'M ***NOT*** SURPRISED! UNCLE HANK HAS SOME ***SERIOUS*** CONNECTIONS!

OH, I ***THINK*** I'VE GOT IT! KEEPING "ROBIN'S" LIFE STORY CLOSE ENOUGH TO ***MY OWN*** MAKES IT PRETTY ***EASY*** TO KEEP TRACK OF... AS LONG AS I REMEMBER ALL THE ***NECESSARY*** "TWEAKS"!

YOUR UNCLE TOLD ME, THAT BASED ON WHAT I SENT HIM LAST NIGHT, A ***SUMMARY*** OF "MY" LIFE AND THERAPY HISTORY ARE ***ALREADY*** AVAILABLE TO THE DOCTOR!

***TELL*** ME ABOUT IT! I ***EVEN*** HAD A ***DRIVER'S LICENSE, CREDIT CARD*** AND ***INSURANCE CARD*** ALL WAITING FOR ME WHEN I GOT UP THIS MORNING!

OKAY, **LAST CHANCE** FOR ME TO COME UP WITH YOU FOR MORAL SUPPORT!

ALL RIGHT THEN! JUST **TEXT** ME WHEN YOU'RE DONE! I'LL BE **RIGHT** ACROSS THE STREET IN THAT COFFEE SHOP!

I THINK I'M GOOD! **NERVOUS** AS HELL, BUT **GOOD!** I THINK I'VE **GOT** THIS!

I **WILL!** SEE YOU SOON, NORA!


OKAY... HERE WE GO!

A short time later, in the doctor's office...

HI, ROBIN! I'M DOCTOR JOHNSON! PLEASE HAVE A SEAT!

OKAY!

YIKES! I HAD NO IDEA DOCTOR C. JOHNSON WAS A WOMAN!

I'VE NEVER BEEN EXAMINED BY A FEMALE DOCTOR BEFORE!

NOT THE BIGGEST CONCERN ON MY LIST RIGHT NOW, BUT IT DOES ADD A TWIST I WASN'T EXPECTING!


SO, BEFORE WE GET TO THE ACTUAL EXAMINATION, WHY DON'T YOU *TELL* ME A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF!
I *DID*, AND GAVE IT A *CURSURY* LOOK! BUT I PREFER TO HEAR MY *PATIENTS* TELL ME ABOUT THEMSELVES IN THEIR *OWN* WORDS! AND ALSO WHAT *THEY* EXPECT FROM *ME!*
UMM... DIDN'T YOU GET MY FILE?
WELL, UMMM... OKAY!


WHEN DID YOU *FIRST* START THINKING OF YOURSELF AS A *FEMALE?*
WELL, I'M FROM *ILLINOIS* ORIGINALLY... THE *CHICAGO* AREA! THE *ONLY CHILD* OF A *SINGLE* MOTHER! I LIVED THERE THROUGH MY UNDERGRADUATE YEARS IN COLLEGE!
NOT UNTIL *AFTER* MY MOTHER *PASSED* A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO! I WAS HAVING TROUBLE *COPING* AND STARTED SEEING A THERAPIST!
IT WAS DURING *THOSE* SESSIONS THAT I STARTED GETTING IN *TOUCH* WITH MY *FEMININE* SELF, SO HE RECOMMENDED ME TO A *DIFFERENT* THERAPIST WHO SPECIALIZED IN *GENDER-AFFIRMATION!*

AND HOW ***LONG*** HAVE YOU BEEN ***LIVING*** AS A WOMAN?

WHAT DID YOUR ***FRIENDS*** THINK?

SINCE MY SENIOR YEAR OF COLLEGE!

TRUTHFULLY, I DIDN'T REALLY ***HAVE*** ANY FRIENDS AT COLLEGE! SO ***NO ONE*** REALLY ***NOTICED!*** OR, IF THEY ***DID,*** THEY DIDN'T ***SAY*** ANYTHING!

AND YOU'VE BEEN OUT HERE GOING TO LAW SCHOOL FOR THE LAST ***YEAR!*** HAVE YOU BEEN SEEING A ***DIFFERENT*** THERAPIST?

NO! I'VE BEEN MEETING WITH MY THERAPIST BACK IN ***CHICAGO*** TWICE A MONTH THROUGH ONLINE ***ZIP*** CONFERENCES!

BUT ***I'M*** THE FIRST ***PHYSICIAN*** YOU'VE SEEN REGARDING YOUR GENDER AFFIRMATION! THAT'S ***UNUSUAL*** AFTER ***ALL*** THIS TIME!

AND WHAT'S CHANGED ***NOW?***

I ***REALIZE*** THAT! BUT I'VE BEEN SO ***FOCUSED*** ON LAW SCHOOL, I DIDN'T REALLY WANT ANYTHING TO POSSIBLY ***DISTRACT*** ME FROM MY STUDIES!

WELL, IT'S ***SUMMER,*** SO I HAVE A FEW MONTHS TO SPEND ON ***MYSELF*** BEFORE I GET CAUGHT UP IN MY ***SECOND*** YEAR OF LAW SCHOOL!

SO I FIGURED I'D USE THE DOWN TIME TO ***FINALLY*** FOLLOW MY THERAPIST'S ADVICE AND ***START*** SEEING SOMEONE OUT ***HERE*** AS WELL!


WELL, OKAY THEN! LET'S GO DOWN TO THE EXAMINATION ROOM SO I CAN TAKE A LOOK AT YOU!
THEN WE'LL COME BACK HERE AND CONTINUE OUR CONVERSATION!
SOUNDS OKAY TO ME!


*SIGH!* JUST KEEP IT TOGETHER, ROBIN!

A short time later, after a slightly ***uncomfortable*** physical examination...

WELL, YOUR GENERAL HEALTH IS JUST ***FINE!*** BLOOD PRESSURE, HEART RATE... ALL ***IDEAL*** FOR SOMEONE YOUR AGE!

OF COURSE I'LL KNOW ***MORE*** WHEN WE GET YOUR FULL BLOOD TEST RESULTS BACK IN A DAY OR TWO!

AS FAR AS YOUR ***HEALTH*** IS CONCERNED, ***YES!*** BUT I ***DO*** HAVE SOME ***RESERVATIONS*** I'D ***STILL*** LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU!

SO FAR SO GOOD! RIGHT, DOCTOR?

RESERVATIONS?

UH-OH!

YOU'VE BEEN LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR CLOSE TO ***TWO YEARS*** NOW, RIGHT?

YET IN ***ALL*** THAT TIME YOU'VE DONE RELATIVELY ***NOTHING*** TO ADVANCE YOUR ACTUAL ***PHYSICAL*** TRANSITION! NO COSMETIC PROCEDURES, NO HORMONES... ***NOTHING!***

EVERYTHING YOU ***HAVE*** DONE... THE BODY SHAPERS, THE MAKEUP AND HAIR EXTENSIONS... BESIDES BEING ***TIME-CONSUMING*** AND ***UNCOMFORTABLE***, ALL SEEM ***SUPERFICIAL*** AT BEST!

IT CAUSES ME TO ***WONDER*** IF YOU REALLY ***ARE*** COMMITTED TO BEING A WOMAN!

***YES!*** JUST A LITTLE ***OVER*** THAT, ACTUALLY!

***SHIT!*** I THINK I ***KNOW*** WHERE THIS IS GOING!

I MEAN, BY ALL ***OUTWARDLY*** APPEARANCES, YOU PRESENT AS A ***LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN!*** BUT IN ***SPITE*** OF YOUR PREVIOUS RECORDS, ***I*** WOULD MORE ***LIKELY*** CLASSIFY YOU AS A ***TRANSVESTITE*** RATHER THAN A ***TRANSSEXUAL!***

IS THERE ***ANYTHING*** YOU CAN TELL ME THAT WOULD CONVINCE ME ***OTHERWISE?***

***CRAP!*** I WAS ***REALLY*** HOPING I ***WOULDN'T*** HAVE TO GO DOWN ***THIS*** PATH! BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I HAVE ***NO CHOICE!***

I TAKE IT SOMETHING HAS ***CHANGED*** IN THAT REGARD!

I'M ***EMBARRASSED*** TO SAY THAT THE ***PRIMARY*** REASON FOR NOT SEEKING MORE ***PERMANENT*** PROCEDURES IS ***COST!***

WHAT ***LITTLE*** MONEY MY ***MOTHER*** LEFT ME WENT TO PAYING MY UNDERGRADUATE ***TUITION!*** AND DURING MY FIRST YEAR OF LAW SCHOOL I LIVED OFF ***SCHOLARSHIPS*** AND ***STUDENT LOANS!***

SO, UP TO NOW, PAYING FOR ANYTHING LIKE ***HORMONE*** TREATMENT OR ANY ***OTHER*** PROCEDURES JUST ***HASN'T*** BEEN POSSIBLE!

IT ***HAS!***

I GOT A VERY **GOOD** SUMMER JOB WITH AN EMPLOYER WHO'S EXTREMELY **SYMPATHETIC** TO MY SITUATION!

THEY'VE OFFERED TO **HELP** WITH **ANY** COSTS FOR **TREATMENTS** I MAY CHOOSE TO START! **WITHIN REASON,** OF COURSE!

THAT'S VERY **GENEROUS** OF THEM!

***YES!*** I'M A VERY **LUCKY** GIRL!

**ESPECIALLY** IF I LIMIT MYSELF TO **ONLY** TREATMENTS THAT ARE **REVERSIBLE!**

AND FROM WHAT I'VE READ, PRETTY MUCH **EVERYTHING** SHY OF FULL-ON **SRS** CAN BE UNDONE!

THEN MAY I SUGGEST STARTING YOU ON ***HORMONE THERAPY*** AS ***SOON*** AS I GET A LOOK AT YOUR BLOOD WORK?

IN FACT, IF YOU LIKE, I'LL ***EXPEDITE*** YOUR LAB RESULTS SO WE CAN GET YOU STARTED ***TOMORROW!***

THAT WOULD BE ***WONDERFUL,*** DOCTOR!

THE SUMMER WILL BE OVER ***BEFORE*** THE HORMONES CAUSE ANY REALLY ***NOTICEABLE*** PHYSICAL EFFECTS, SO I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT ***THEM*** AT ALL!

AND AS YOUR **NEW** DOCTOR, I HAVE TO **INSIST** YOU **STOP** WEARING THAT **CORSET** ON A DAILY BASIS! BESIDES BEING **DANGEROUS,** I'M **SURE** IT'S **EXTREMELY** UNCOMFORTABLE!

YEAH... **IT IS!** A **FRIEND** RECOMMENDED IT TO HELP **CINCH** MY WAIST **AND** GIVE ME A LITTLE **CLEAVAGE** WITHOUT HAVING TO DEAL WITH BRA INSERTS!

THE HORMONES WILL HELP WITH **BOTH** OF THOSE ISSUES! **PLUS** I CAN RECOMMEND SOME **EXERCISES** AND **DIET** TO HELP REDUCE YOUR WAIST!

IF IT'LL KEEP ME FROM HAVING TO WEAR **THIS** THING, I'M **ALL** FOR IT! *GIGGLE!*

AND SINCE YOU'VE INDICATED A **RELUCTANCE** TO USE **BRA INSERTS,** MAY I MAKE A SUGGESTION?

UMMM... SURE!

THERE'S A PROCEDURE COLLOQUIALLY CALLED "***VACATION BREASTS***" THAT INVOLVES INSERTING ***SALINE*** SOLUTION INTO THE BREASTS TO ENLARGE AND SHAPE THEM!

ORIGINALLY, ***YES!*** BUT IT'S BEEN ***MODIFIED*** TO LAST ***SEVERAL DAYS*** OR EVEN SEVERAL ***WEEKS*** DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS OF THE PATIENT!

IT'S A RELATIVELY ***NEW*** PROCEDURE, BUT I'VE USED IT ON ***MANY*** OF MY PATIENTS WITH ***GREAT*** SUCCESS!

IS THIS ***SOMETHING*** YOU MIGHT BE ***INTERESTED*** IN?

I'VE HEARD OF IT! BUT DOESN'T IT ONLY LAST ABOUT ***24 HOURS?***

I DIDN'T ***KNOW*** THAT!

I... I'M NOT SURE!

***DAMN!*** I DIDN'T THINK SHE'D BE ***PUSHING*** SOMETHING LIKE THIS ***SO SOON!***

IF IT WERE PERMANENT, ***OF COURSE!*** BUT LIKE I SAID, THIS IS A ***TEMPORARY*** PROCEDURE DESIGNED TO GIVE WOMEN A ***PREVIEW*** OF HOW NEW BREASTS WOULD ***LOOK*** AND ***FEEL!***

IT'S ALSO SOMETHING THAT TAKES VERY ***LITTLE*** TIME, NO ***RECOVERY*** PERIOD AND I PERFORM RIGHT DOWN THE HALL!

I ***AM!*** AND ***I*** THINK YOU'LL ***AGREE*** TO IT FOR TWO ***VERY GOOD*** REASONS!

I REALLY ***SHOULD*** GIVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS A ***LOT*** MORE THOUGHT, ***SHOULDN'T*** I?

IT ***SOUNDS*** LIKE YOU'RE ASKING ME IF I WANT TO GET IT DONE RIGHT ***HERE*** AND ***NOW!***

***TWO,*** HUH? WHAT ***ARE*** THEY?

FIRST, YOU WON'T NEED THE *"SHOVING UP"* EFFECT OF THAT *CORSET* THAT I *WASN'T* GOING TO LET YOU WEAR *OUT* OF HERE ANYWAY!

BECAUSE I'M *SO SURE* YOU'LL DECIDE YOU *LOVE* THEM AND WANT TO KEEP THEM *LONGER*, I'LL *GIVE* YOU THE ONE WEEK VERSION AT *NO CHARGE!*

*NOT* HAVING TO WEAR THE *"CRUSHER"* ANYMORE? THAT'S A *BIG, BIG PLUS!* BUT STILL...

OKAY, I'LL GIVE YOU *THAT* ONE! WHAT'S THE *OTHER* REASON?

I DON'T **KID** WHEN IT COMES TO MY **PATIENT'S** CARE!

I CONSIDER IT AN **INVESTMENT**... IN **YOU!**

WHAT DO YOU SAY? I COULD HAVE YOU OUT OF HERE IN **LESS** THAN AN **HOUR** LOOKING EVEN **BETTER** THAN YOU DO RIGHT NOW!

**HOLY SHIT!**

**NO CHARGE?** YOU'RE **KIDDING!**

THAT'S... INCREDIBLY **GENEROUS** OF YOU!

DAMN! I WISH NORA HAD COME IN WITH ME! I COULD REALLY USE HER OPINION RIGHT ABOUT NOW!

BUT IT IS TEMPORARY, SO EVEN IF SHE DOESN'T APPROVE, MY MISTAKE IS GONE IN A LITTLE OVER A WEEK!

AND IT DOES GIVE ME ONE FUCKING GOOD REASON TO STOP WEARING THIS CINCHER FROM HELL! FOR A FEW DAYS, AT LEAST!

SO THIS REALLY IS A NO-BRAINER, ISN'T IT?


OKAY, DOCTOR! LET ME TEXT MY FRIEND AND TELL HER I'M GOING TO BE A LITTLE LATE!
THEN I'M ALL YOURS!

A little over an hour later...

OKAY ROBIN, WHERE THE HECK ARE YOU?

IT'S BEEN OVER AN HOUR SINCE YOU TEXTED AND NOW I'M OVER-BUZZED FROM WAY TOO MANY LATTES!

CHOP CHOP!

SHE DIDN'T SAY ***WHY*** THE APPOINTMENT WAS RUNNING SO LONG, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE IT HAS ***SOMETHING*** TO DO WITH THE ***OVERWHELMING*** AMOUNT OF INFO THE DOCTOR IS PROBABLY ***BOMBARDING*** HER WITH!

I KNOW SHE ***SAID*** SHE WANTED TO DO THIS ***ALONE,*** BUT I ***STILL*** SHOULD'VE BEEN UP THERE WITH HER! IF ***NOT*** FOR MORAL SUPPORT, THEN AT ***LEAST*** TO HELP HER ***UNDERSTAND*** EVERYTHING THEY'RE DISCUSSING UP THERE!

MAYBE EVEN PROVIDE A LITTLE ***GUIDANCE*** ON ANYTHING SHE ***COULD*** DO... IN THE ***SHORT*** RUN AT LEAST!

***AND*** LET HER KNOW THAT, ***IF NECESSARY,*** UNCLE HANK HAS SOME RATHER ***DEEP POCKETS!***

HEY THERE! ***SORRY*** I TOOK SO LONG!

BUT THE DOCTOR AND I GOT TO TALKING! AND *ONE THING* LED TO *ANOTHER*...

*NOT A PROBLEM!* I KNOW HOW DOCTORS CAN *RAMBLE* ON, AND...


*GASP!*
HOLY SHIT,
GIRL!

FIRST OFF, THEY'RE ***TEMPORARY!*** THEY'LL ONLY LAST ABOUT ***A WEEK!***

BUT ARE THEY ***TOO MUCH?*** WAS I COMPLETELY ***INSANE*** TO DO SUCH AN ***IMPULSIVE*** THING?

***PLEASE!*** BE ***HONEST!***

HONESTLY? THEY LOOK ***AMAZING!*** BETTER THAN ANYTHING ***I*** COULD'VE COME UP WITH!

THANK GOD! AS SOON AS SHE FINISHED I GOT THIS HORRIBLE FEAR THAT I'D MADE A HUGE MISTAKE!

YOU WERE? REALLY?

NOT AT ALL! IN FACT, IF THE DOCTOR HADN'T SUGGESTED IT, I WAS GOING TO!

ABSOLUTELY! THE FEWER THINGS YOU HAVE TO WEAR THAT SQUEEZE YOU INTO PLACE, THE BETTER!

NO, IT'S ***HERE*** IN THIS BAG THE DOCTOR GAVE ME... ALONG WITH MY ***PURSE*** AND THE ***TOP*** PART OF THIS BLOUSE!

DOCTOR JOHNSON WANTED ME TO, UMMM... ***DISPLAY*** HER WORK!

SPEAKING OF... I ***NOTICE*** YOU'RE NOT WEARING YOUR ***CORSET*** ANYMORE! YOU DIDN'T ***LEAVE*** IT UP THERE, DID YOU?

SMART LADY! ***ALWAYS*** TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ***FREE ADVERTISING!*** *GIGGLE!*

PROBLEM IS, SHE GAVE ME THESE **ON SPEC** ASSUMING I'D BE BACK FOR THE **SEVERAL WEEK** VERSION, BUT THERE'S **NO WAY** I CAN **AFFORD** THEM!

HE'D SERIOUSLY **DO** THAT?

THAT'S... **GOOD** TO KNOW! I GUESS!

I **WOULDN'T** WORRY ABOUT THAT! ONCE UNCLE HANK SEES HOW MUCH **MORE CONVINCING** YOU LOOK NOW, HE'LL **HAPPILY** SPRING FOR **WHATEVER** YOU NEED!

IN A **HEARTBEAT!** A COUPLE OF THINGS YOU'LL **LEARN** ABOUT MY UNCLE, HE **DOESN'T** LIKE TO **LOSE** AND HE **DOESN'T** DO **ANYTHING** HALF-ASSED!

ONCE HE SINKS HIS **TEETH** INTO A PROJECT, HE SEES IT THROUGH TO THE **END**... NO MATTER **WHAT!**

SO, C'MON! NOW THAT YOU HAVE A ***NEW*** FIGURE, WE NEED TO BUY A FEW ***MORE*** OUTFITS BEFORE YOU MEET MY ***AUNT*** THIS AFTERNOON!

WITH BOTH ME ***AND*** MY UNCLE ON YOUR SIDE, THERE'S ***NO WAY*** YOU CAN ***FAIL!*** *GIGGLE!*

YOU ***REALLY*** THINK I CAN PULL THIS OFF?

I ***HOPE*** YOU'RE RIGHT!


Later that afternoon...

SO, YOU SAID YOU HAD A ***SURPRISE*** FOR ME!

THAT'S ***WONDERFUL***, HANK! THANK YOU ***SO*** MUCH FOR TAKING THAT OFF ***MY*** PLATE!

I ***DO!*** I ***FOUND*** YOU A ***SUMMER CLERK!***

IT WAS ***MY PLEASURE***, LOVE!

I ***HOPE*** YOU DON'T MIND, BUT SINCE HER APARTMENT HAD ONLY A ***TEN-MONTH*** LEASE, ***I*** TOLD HER SHE COULD STAY IN THE ***COTTAGE HOUSE*** FOR THE SUMMER!

***I*** DON'T MIND AT ALL! DOES ***THAT*** MEAN I GET TO MEET HER ***THIS EVENING?***

EVEN ***SOONER,*** AS A MATTER OF FACT!

ABBY, MEET **ROBIN SULLIVAN!**

IT'S SO **NICE** TO FINALLY **MEET** YOU, MRS. MONROE!

YES, MA'AM... I MEAN, **ABBY!**

WELL, **YOU'RE** CERTAINLY **ADORABLE!**

BUT IF YOU PLAN ON **KEEPING** THIS JOB, YOU'D BETTER **START** CALLING ME **ABBY!**


EXCELLENT, ROBIN DEAR! NOW, WHY DON'T WE HAVE A SEAT SO WE CAN GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER!
I'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH, ABBY!

A few hours later...

GOOD LORD, ABBY! ARE YOU STILL GRILLING THIS POOR GIRL?

OH, HUSH, HANK! WE'RE JUST CHATTING!


IT'S ALL **MY** FAULT, MR. MONROE! ONCE ABBY MENTIONED **ONE** OF HER CASES, I JUST **HAD** TO HEAR **MORE!**
I'M AFRAID **I'M** THE ONE WHO'S BEEN **MONOPOLIZING** HER TIME ALL AFTERNOON!
**NONSENSE,** DEAR! **I'VE** ENJOYED **EVERY SECOND** OF OUR TIME TOGETHER TODAY!

AND I HOPE TO ENJOY *EVERY MOMENT* WE HAVE TOGETHER THIS SUMMER!

I *KNOW* YOU WON'T DEAR!

Slam

*I'M* HOPING SO, *TOO,* ABBY! AND I PROMISE I *WON'T* DISAPPOINT YOU FOR GIVING ME THIS OPPORTUNITY!


HEY, EVERYONE!
HELLO, NORA, DEAR! HAVE YOU MET ROBIN YET?
OH, YEAH! UNCLE HANK CALLED ME OVER YESTERDAY SO I COULD HELP HER GET SETTLED IN!
YOU READY TO GO, ROBIN?
I THINK SO!


WHERE ARE YOU TWO OFF TO?
WELL ISN'T THAT SWEET OF YOU, DEAR!
WE'RE MEETING A COUPLE OF FRIENDS OF MINE FOR DINNER AND SOME GIRL TALK!
IT WAS UNCLE HANK'S IDEA!
NORA HAS BEEN REALLY WONDERFUL ABOUT INTRODUCING ME TO HER FRIENDS!


DO YOU STILL WANT TO RIDE IN WITH ME FOR YOUR FIRST DAY TOMORROW, ROBIN?
THEN BE HERE AND READY TO GO BY 7:30!
YOU TOO, DEAR! BOTH OF YOU!
YES, I WOULD LOVE THAT!
I WILL BE! HAVE A GOOD EVENING!


YOU HAVE DONE A VERY GOOD THING FOR BOTH ME AND THAT SPECIAL YOUNG LADY!
NOW... HOW SHOULD I REWARD YOU FOR THAT?
OH, I THINK WE CAN COME UP WITH SOMETHING! *CHUCKLE!*

SO, HOW'D IT GO?

THAT'S MY ***AUNT ABBY,*** ALL RIGHT!

OH MY GOD, IT WENT ***GREAT!*** WE CHATTED FOR A COUPLE OF ***HOURS*** AND SHE ***NEVER ONCE*** MADE ME FEEL ***UNCOMFORTABLE!***


BY MARRIAGE! MY UNCLE HANK IS MY MOTHER'S OLDER BROTHER!
BUT THEY'VE BOTH BEEN LIKE SECOND PARENTS TO ME FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER!
IS SHE YOUR ACTUAL AUNT OR AUNT BY MARRIAGE?
I CAN SEE WHY! I'VE ONLY KNOWN THEM FOR A SHORT TIME BUT THEY ALREADY FEEL LIKE FAMILY... OR AT LEAST WHAT I IMAGINE FAMILY IS SUPPOSED TO FEEL LIKE!

TAKE **MY** WORD FOR IT, **THOSE** TWO ARE **EXACTLY** WHAT FAMILY IS **SUPPOSED** TO FEEL LIKE!

THEY'VE NEVER BEEN **ABLE** TO HAVE KIDS OF THEIR **OWN**, SO **I'VE** ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THE DAUGHTER THEY **NEVER** HAD!

AND IF **YOU'RE** GETTING THAT VIBE FROM THEM, THEN YOU'RE **OBVIOUSLY** DOING SOMETHING **RIGHT!**

THAT'S JUST IT, THOUGH! I'M NOT DOING SOMETHING RIGHT! I'M LYING TO ABBY!

WHEN I FIRST AGREED TO DO THIS I WAS OKAY WITH IT BECAUSE IT WAS A WAY TO HELP ME STAY IN LAW SCHOOL AND MAYBE HELP ABBY'S CHANCES OF GETTING THE NOMINATION FOR STATE AG!

BUT NOW THAT I'VE MET HER AND GOTTEN TO KNOW HER, I FEEL HORRIBLE ABOUT KEEPING THE TRUTH FROM HER!

SO I'M SUDDENLY BEGINNING TO WONDER IF I CAN DO THIS JOB IF IT MEANS LYING TO HER FACE EVERY DAY!

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT... DO YOU **WANT** THIS JOB?

AND DO YOU **ALSO** WANT TO **HELP** GET ABBY **ELECTED?**

SO REALLY YOUR **ONLY** PROBLEM IS YOU **THINK** YOU'RE **LYING** TO HER!

AND **THAT'S** WHERE YOU'RE **WRONG!**

**YES!** IT'S AN **INCREDIBLE** OPPORTUNITY AND I'M SURE I'LL **LOVE** WORKING FOR **ABBY!**

OF **COURSE!** SHE'LL BE AN **AMAZING AG!**

I **AM** LYING TO HER! *"ROBIN SULLIVAN"* **DOESN'T EXIST!**

**WHAT** ARE YOU **TALKING** ABOUT?

YOU **HAVE** TO STOP THINKING OF YOURSELF AS A **MAN** PRETENDING TO BE A **WOMAN** AND **TURN IT AROUND!**

REMEMBER THAT **ROBIN IS** A **WOMAN** WHO HAS LIVED FOR **YEARS** IN THE **BODY** OF A **MAN** AND HAS JUST **RECENTLY** DISCOVERED THE **COURAGE** TO LIVE THE WAY SHE WAS **MEANT** TO!

SO **YOU** NEED TO **EMBRACE** THE IDEA THAT YOU'VE **ALWAYS BEEN ROBIN,** BUT SPENT SO MANY YEARS **PRETENDING** TO BE **ROBERT!**

ONCE YOU CAN DO **THAT** YOU'LL BE LESS **STRESSED,** MORE **COMFORTABLE** WITH WHO YOU ARE, AND REALIZE YOU'RE **NOT LYING** TO MY AUNT... YOU'RE ONLY **DELAYING** THE TRUTH!

WELL... WE'LL JUST JUMP OFF **THAT** BRIDGE WHEN WE **GET** TO IT! *GIGGLE!*

**JUST** LIKE **THAT,** HUH? AND WHAT HAPPENS AT THE **END** OF THE SUMMER WHEN THE JOB ENDS?

*SIGH!* I ***UNDERSTAND*** WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BUT IT'S HARDLY AS ***EASY*** AS YOU MAKE IT SOUND!

OF ***COURSE*** IT ISN'T! IF IT WAS, ***EVERYONE*** WOULD BE A ***FABULOUS*** ACTOR, ***LIKE ME!*** *GIGGLE!*

GOOD POINT! *GIGGLE!*

WELL, SHIT!

THE ÖBER DRIVER JUST TEXTED AND SAID HE'S RUNNING LATE! ZERO STARS FOR YOU, ASSHOLE!

WHAT?

JUST CANCEL THE ÖBER! I'LL DRIVE!


I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD A CAR!
NOTHING FANCY, BUT IT WORKS!
C'MON! IT'S PARKED IN THE LOT BACK BEHIND THE COTTAGE HOUSE!

LET ME GUESS... **YOU** THOUGHT THIS LOT WAS **FREE PARKING?**

YEAH, I DID! **SHIT!** THAT'S PROBABLY **NOT** GOING TO BE **CHEAP!**

IT **WON'T** BE!

BUT WHERE **ELSE** CAN I PARK IT? I **DON'T** WANT TO PUT **MY** PIECE OF SHIT IN FRONT OF **ABBY** AND **HANK'S** HOUSE!

THEN PARK IT AT **MY** PLACE! **YOU** WON'T BE **NEEDING** IT THAT MUCH IF YOU'RE RIDING IN TO WORK WITH **ABBY!**

BESIDES, YOU PROBABLY **SHOULDN'T** BE DRIVING IT **ANYWAY** ON THE **OUTSIDE** CHANCE YOU GET **PULLED OVER** AND THE OFFICER NOTICES IT'S **NOT** REGISTERED TO ROBIN SULLIVAN!

I **GUESS** THAT'LL WORK!

YEAH... I HADN'T **THOUGHT** OF THAT!


PAGAMENTO
PAYMENT
SAÍDA
PRAIA
BEACH
Club Lake
SO I'LL JUST DRIVE REAL CAREFUL TODAY AND THEN YOU CAN TAKE IT HOME TONIGHT! SOUND GOOD?
AWESOME! I'LL TEXT THE GIRLS AND TELL 'EM WE'RE ON OUR WAY!

A short time later...



MAN, THIS NEW SET OF WHEELS YOUR OLD MAN GOT YOU IS ***AWESOME!*** THINK HE'D LIKE TO ***ADOPT*** ME? *HEH-HEH!*

***YOU*** COULDN'T HANDLE ***MY*** OLD MAN, DUDE! ***TRUST ME!*** *CHUCKLE!*

HEY! ISN'T THAT STILLMAN'S CAR IN FRONT OF US?

I'M SURPRISED HE'S STILL IN TOWN AFTER BOLTING FROM THE HOUSE THE WAY HE DID!

IT IS! I'D RECOGNIZE THAT PIECE OF SHIT ANYWHERE!

YEAH! PRETTY FUCKIN' RUDE OF HIM AFTER WE WENT TO ALL THAT TROUBLE TO MAKE "ROBERTA" FEEL WELCOME! *HEH-HEH!*


MAYBE WE NEED TO CATCH UP WITH OUR OLD BUDDY AND MAKE SURE HE'S GETTIN' ALONG OKAY WITHOUT US!
GREAT IDEA! I'D SURE HATE FOR HIM TO THINK WE'VE FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT HIM! *CHUCKLE!*
LAUNDROMAT


WHAT?
WE'RE ALMOST AT THE RESTAURANT! WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?
OH SHIT!
MY OLD HOUSEMATES ARE RIGHT BEHIND US! I'M SURE THEY RECOGNIZE MY CAR!


GET THEM OFF MY BACK, ONCE AND FOR ALL!

A few miles later...

HEY, IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S PULLING OVER! AND I ***THINK*** HE'S GOT SOMEONE ***WITH*** HIM!

***FRIENDS? NO*** FUCKIN' ***WAY!*** PROBABLY ***LIVIN'*** IN HIS CAR AND TOOK IN A ***ROOMIE!*** *HEH-HEH!*

PULL UP BEHIND 'EM SO WE CAN GIVE 'EM A ***PROPER*** "HELLO"!

THIS IS GONNA BE FUN!

TELL ME ABOUT IT!

Holiday

OVER

NEW bombshellvolume

10X MORE NOTICEABLE LASHES

NEW YORK
OPE 6975
THE EMPIRE STATE

UMMM... IAN?

YOU **SURE** THIS IS **STILLMAN'S** CAR?

YEAH, DUDE?

**HUNDRED PERCENT** SURE! WHY?

CAN I **HELP** YOU **BOYS** WITH SOMETHING?

**OH!** WELL... WE WERE **JUST,** UMMM...

IF YOU WERE **JUST,** UMMM... TRYING TO BE **STALKERS,** I'D SUGGEST **ANOTHER** LINE OF WORK, BECAUSE YOU'RE **NOT** VERY **GOOD** AT IT!

**WHOA!**

WE JUST THOUGHT THIS CAR BELONGED TO A ***FRIEND*** OF OURS AND WERE GOING TO ***MESS*** WITH HIM A LITTLE!

UH-HUH! I'M ***SURE*** YOUR *"FRIEND"* WOULD'VE REALLY ***APPRECIATED*** HAVING YOU TWO RIDING HIS ASS ***SO CLOSE*** HE COULD ***SEE*** YOU BOTH LAUGHING ***HYSTERICALLY!***

BECAUSE THE TWO OF ***US*** THOUGHT IT WAS A ***REAL HOOT!***

***YEAH!*** JUST HAVE A LITTLE ***FUN*** WITH HIM! ***THAT'S*** ALL! *HEH-HEH!*

WELL **MAYBE** WE COULD **MAKE IT UP** TO YOU BY BUYING YOU LADIES A **DRINK!**

OH **PLEASE!** THE **LAST** TIME I WENT OUT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAD THE EMOTIONAL MATURITY **YOU TWO** DEMONSTRATE WAS IN **MIDDLE SCHOOL!**

SO I'M **SURE** YOU'LL UNDERSTAND **WHY** WE'LL **PASS** ON YOUR **KIND** OFFER!

GOOD NIGHT, **BOYS!**

I THOUGHT YOU WERE "100% SURE" THIS WAS STILLMAN'S CAR, ASSHOLE!

NO SHIT!

OKAY, 75% MAYBE!

WICKED ASSES ON THOSE CHICKS, THOUGH!

CAN I JUST SAY HOW FUCKING AMAZED AND PROUD I AM OF YOU?

THE WAY YOU HIKED UP YOUR SKIRT BEFORE GETTING OUT OF THE CAR AND THE EXTRA UMPH YOU'RE PUTTING INTO YOUR WALK RIGHT NOW...

HELL, IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SAY YOU WERE AN OLD PRO AT THIS! *GIGGLE!*

YEAH, I'M, UHHH... KIND OF PROUD OF MYSELF, TOO!

IT WAS ALL KIND OF A SPUR OF THE MOMENT THING!

I JUST WANTED TO MAKE DAMN SURE **THOSE** TWO ASSHOLES **KNEW** THAT **ROBERT STILLMAN** WAS **GONE** FOR THE SUMMER!

AND THEY'RE **NOT** GOING TO FIND **HIM** **ANYWHERE!**

# A Miss-Judgement

## Part Two

by C. Black


The next day...
SO, THIS IS MONROE, DOBBINS AND MCCOY!
I WISH I COULD SPEND MORE TIME SHOWING YOU AROUND, ROBIN, BUT I'M DUE IN COURT IN AN HOUR!
I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND!

I'M SURPRISED AT HOW **BUSY** IT IS FOR **8 AM!**

ANY I MIGHT HAVE HEARD OF?

THAT'S **NOT** UNUSUAL! **ESPECIALLY** SINCE WE HAVE SEVERAL **HIGH PROFILE** CASES WE'RE CURRENTLY WORKING ON!

***PROBABLY!*** BUT I'LL LET YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR FILL YOU IN!


ROBIN SULLIVAN, THIS IS JILL WEATHERS! SHE'S THE TOP EQUITY PARTNER IN OUR FIRM AND YOU'LL BE REPORTING DIRECTLY TO HER!
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU MS. WEATHERS!
YOU TOO, ROBIN! AND SINCE WE'RE ALL PRETTY MUCH ON A FIRST NAME BASIS AROUND HERE, CALL ME JILL!

SINCE I **DON'T** KNOW HOW **LONG** I'LL BE IN COURT TODAY, I WOULDN'T COUNT ON **ME** FOR A RIDE HOME!

THEN I'LL LEAVE YOU IN VERY **CAPABLE** HANDS!

**THAT'S** OKAY! **NORA'S** PICKING ME UP AFTER WORK!

THANK YOU, ABBY! AND **GOOD LUCK** TODAY!

YOU'LL GET THE CHANCE TO MEET ***EVERYONE*** IN YOUR ***OWN*** TIME, BUT HERE'S A ***QUICK*** RUNDOWN OF THE FEW I CAN ***SEE*** FROM HERE...

OVER HERE IS ***MARK!*** HE'S ONE OF OUR ***IN COUNSEL*** ATTORNEYS! HE'LL ***TRY*** TO MAKE ***YOU*** HIS PERSONAL ***COFFEE GOPHER! DON'T LET HIM!***

NO COFFEE RUNS FOR MARK! ***GOT IT!***

GINA, MARCUS AND STEPHANIE ARE ALL ***ASSOCIATES*** CURRENTLY SPREAD OUT THROUGHOUT THE OFFICE! THEY'RE ***ALL*** SO ***WOUND UP*** THEY MAY NOT ***NOTICE*** YOU FOR A GOOD ***WEEK*** OR SO!

I'LL STAY OUT OF THEIR WAY UNTIL THEY ***NEED*** ME!

AND THE RATHER ***INTENSE*** LOOKING GUY BEHIND ME STARING INTO HIS PHONE IS ***SKIP!*** HE'S A FREE-LANCE ***INVESTIGATOR*** WE KEEP ON RETAINER!

AS YOU CAN SEE, HE REALLY ***EARNS*** HIS MONEY!

JUST ***SEEING*** IF YOU WERE ***CONSCIOUS!***

*GIGGLE!*

I CAN HEAR YOU, YOU KNOW!

UMM... YEAH! IT WAS A LOT ***TOUGHER*** THAN I THOUGHT IT'D BE! THERE WERE ALSO SOME ***PERSONAL*** ISSUES I HAD TO DEAL WITH... BUT THEY'RE ***NOT*** AN EXCUSE SO I WON'T ***BORE*** YOU WITH THEM!

NO! I, UHHH... I'M ***NOT!***

SO, I UNDERSTAND YOU ***STRUGGLED*** A BIT DURING YOUR FIRST YEAR!

***SMART CHOICE!*** AND YOU'RE NOT ***RELATED*** TO ANYONE HERE AT THE FIRM?

NEITHER A ***TYPE-A DRONE*** NOR A ***NEPO-BABY!*** HMMM! I THINK ***YOU*** AND ***I*** ARE GOING TO GET ALONG ***JUST FINE,*** ROBIN!

I... ***I*** THINK SO, TOO, JILL!

Later that afternoon...

GOTTA GO, CLIFF! WE'LL TALK AGAIN TOMORROW!

I TAKE IT ROBIN'S **ALREADY** LEFT!

YEP! **JUST** MISSED HER! HOW'D IT GO IN COURT?

ABOUT WHAT WE EXPECTED! **I'LL** BE CROSS-EXAMINING THEIR **MAIN** WITNESS TOMORROW!

SO, WHAT DO YOU *THINK* OF HER?

AND *THAT'S* PROBABLY *WHY* YOU LIKE HER!

ACTUALLY, *HANK* HIRED HER SINCE *I* WAS SO *CAUGHT UP* IN THIS TRIAL!

BUT AFTER *MEETING* HER, I *AGREED* WITH HIS CHOICE *100%!*

I *LIKE* HER! SHE'S *DIFFERENT* FROM THE GIRLS YOU *USUALLY* HIRE FOR THE SUMMER!

*EXACTLY!* *CHUCKLE!*

DID SHE TELL YOU ***ANYTHING*** ABOUT HERSELF?

WELL... ***EXCEPT*** FOR A MOTHER WHO I ***WOULDN'T*** CALL A VERY ***POSITIVE*** INFLUENCE, SHE'S PRETTY MUCH ***RAISED HERSELF!***

AND IT WASN'T UNTIL HER MOTHER ***DIED*** A FEW YEARS AGO THAT ROBIN WAS ***FINALLY*** ABLE TO START COMING INTO HER OWN!

I AGREE! BUT I THINK THERE'S SO MUCH ***MORE*** TO THIS GIRL THAT HAS ***YET*** TO BE REALIZED!

WE DIDN'T GET THE ***CHANCE*** TO TALK THAT LONG! SHE ***DID*** MENTION SOMETHING ABOUT ***PERSONAL ISSUES,*** BUT ***DECLINED*** TO GO INTO ANY DETAIL!

WELL SHE ***SEEMS*** TO HAVE DONE A PRETTY ***DAMN GOOD*** JOB SO FAR!

SHE'S ALREADY GOT **NORA** HELPING HER TO FIT IN WITH **HER** CROWD, BUT I THINK **YOU AND I** CAN HELP HER HELP GROW EVEN **MORE** BY BEING THE **ROLE MODELS** SHE'S **NEVER** HAD!

I'M ON BOARD! BUT DON'T YOU **DARE** ASK **ME** TO BE A **"MOTHER"** INFLUENCE TO HER!

I KNOW **BETTER** THAN THAT, JILL! BESIDES, **I** PRETTY MUCH **ALREADY** ADOPTED **THAT** ROLE!

JUST BE **YOURSELF,** A STRONG, **CONFIDENT, PROFESSIONAL WOMAN,** AND SHE'LL BENEFIT IN **MORE** WAYS THAN **ONE!**

***THAT*** I CAN ***DO!***

***THANKS,*** JILL! I ***KNEW*** I COULD COUNT ON YOU!


NOW, HOW ABOUT JOINING ME FOR A DRINK BEFORE HEADING HOME?
I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK!

A short time later...

SO, HOW WAS YOUR FIRST ***FULL*** DAY WITH THE ***"VACATION BREASTS"***?

I HAVE TO ADMIT, IT WENT A LOT ***BETTER*** THAN I ***THOUGHT*** IT WOULD!

THE COUPLE OF PEOPLE WHO ***KNEW*** I GOT THEM WERE VERY ***SUPPORTIVE*** AND VERY ***COMPLIMENTARY!***

AND ***NOT*** HAVING TO WEAR THE ***CORSET*** WAS A ***HUGE*** PLUS AS FAR AS ***I'M*** CONCERNED!

I ***THOUGHT*** YOU'D LIKE THEM! IN FACT, ***NONE*** OF MY PATIENTS HAS ***EVER*** GIVEN THEM A ***BAD*** REVIEW!

SO, SINCE YOUR BODY WILL START ABSORBING ***THESE*** IN ABOUT A WEEK, SHOULD WE MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE ***THREE-WEEK UPGRADE?***

THEN SHOULD I TAKE ***THAT*** AS A ***"YES"?*** I HAVE AN OPENING ***NEXT FRIDAY*** AFTERNOON AT 4:30!

WELL, I ***REALLY*** DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO RESORT TO ***STUFFING*** MY ***BRA!*** AND MY EMPLOYER ***DID*** AGREE TO ***PAY*** FOR THEM IF I CHOSE TO DO SO!

I GUESS IT'D BE ***SILLY*** OF ME ***NOT*** TO!

EXCELLENT! THEN LET'S STEP INTO THE EXAMINATION ROOM SO I CAN GIVE YOU YOUR FIRST HORMONE INJECTION!

OH, YOU'LL GET PILLS, TOO, FOR DAILY USE! THE INJECTIONS ARE JUST ONCE A MONTH FOR THE FIRST COUPLE OF MONTHS TO HELP ACCELERATE THE PILLS' EFFECTIVENESS!

YOU SHOULD START SEEING RESULTS IN WEEKS RATHER THAN MONTHS!

INJECTION? I... I THOUGHT THEY'D BE PILLS!

OH! **WOW!** THAT'S, UMMM... **GREAT!**

**"WEEKS"?! CRAP!** THAT'S WHAT I **GET** FOR USING **GAGGLE** SEARCHES FOR MY RESEARCH INSTEAD OF **PEER-REVIEWED** SOURCES!

HOW THE **HELL** AM I GOING TO **HIDE** THE **CHANGES** TO MY BODY WHEN THE FALL SEMESTER STARTS BACK UP? **BAGGY CLOTHES?**

And, a short time after that...

I SWEAR, I ALMOST ***FREAKED*** WHEN THE DOCTOR TOLD ME THE HORMONE'S EFFECTS WOULD BE ***VISIBLE*** AFTER JUST A COUPLE OF ***WEEKS!***

***I*** THOUGHT IT TOOK ***MONTHS!***

YEAH... I GUESS IT DOES!

***I*** DID TOO! BUT ***I*** DON'T NORMALLY ***KEEP UP*** ON THE ***NEW*** DEVELOPMENTS IN HORMONE THERAPY, SO I'M ***NOT*** REALLY ***THAT*** SURPRISED!

***SCIENCE MARCHES ON,*** AND ALL THAT!


SO, DID YOU SCHEDULE THE BOOB UPGRADE?
UMMM... YEAH! NEXT FRIDAY AFTERNOON!
PERFECT! JUST IN TIME FOR THE WEEKEND! *GIGGLE!*

SPEAKING OF GOING OUT, CAN I ***PASS*** ON GOING OUT WITH YOU ALL TONIGHT? THAT ***SHOT*** LEFT ME A LITTLE ***LOOPY,*** NOT TO MENTION A LITTLE ***TENDER!***

OH, I ***SUPPOSE*** SO! BUT THAT JUST MEANS WE'LL HAVE TO HAVE ***TWICE*** AS MUCH FUN ***TOMORROW*** NIGHT! ***DEAL?***

*SIGH!* DEAL!

A few days later...

TO SAY THAT THE LAST WEEK HAS BEEN A CHAOTIC ***WHIRLWIND*** IS A ***MASSIVE UNDERSTATEMENT!***

I'M SURE WHEN MY ***ASININE*** EX-HOUSEMATES FIRST ***TRICKED*** ME INTO WEARING A SKIRT THEY HAD ***NO CLUE*** WHAT THEY WERE SETTING IN MOTION!

HELL, I'M ***LIVING*** WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ***CHILDISH*** LITTLE PRANK AND ***HARDLY*** BELIEVE IT ***MYSELF!***

I **SHOULD** BE **FURIOUS** AT THEM, AND **I AM!** BUT JUST **NOT** AS MUCH AS I **COULD** BE!

BECAUSE ALTHOUGH I'M **STILL** PRETENDING TO BE A WOMAN, **AND** TAKING **HORMONES, AND** GETTING A TEMPORARY **BOOB JOB,** MY LIFE RIGHT NOW AS **ROBIN** IS A **HELL** OF A LOT BETTER THAN MY LIFE **EVER** WAS AS **ROBERT!**

A FACT THAT BECAME EVEN **MORE** EVIDENT WHEN I WAS ABLE TO **LOOK** THEM IN THE EYES AND TELL THEM OFF **WITHOUT** THEM **RECOGNIZING** ME AT ALL!

I'M HAVING TO MAKE A LOT OF **ADJUSTMENTS** THIS SUMMER, BUT SO FAR, THEY'VE **ALL** BEEN **WORTH** IT!

AND **NORA** IS **RIGHT!** SINCE THIS IS A **TEMPORARY** SITUATION, **FULLY ACCEPTING** THE ROLE IS THE **BEST** OPTION FOR ME AND **EVERYONE** INVOLVED!

THE LESS **I** HAVE TO **STRESS** ABOUT BEING DISCOVERED, THE **MORE** I CAN **ENJOY** THE SUMMER WITH MY **INCREDIBLE** NEW JOB AND **AWESOME** NEW FRIENDS!

AND, IF **MY** BEING HERE CAN **SOMEHOW** HELP **ABBY** GET NOMINATED FOR THE **AG** JOB, THEN THAT'S ALL THE **MORE** REASON TO **EMBRACE** THIS LIFE TO THE **FULLEST!**

AT **LEAST** WHILE IT **LASTS!**

Knock knock

*SIGH!* I'LL **BET** THAT'S **NORA!** TAKING ONE LAST **STAB** AT GETTING ME TO COME OUT TONIGHT!

Knock knock

I'M COMING!

I CAN COME BACK IF THIS IS A BAD TIME! YOU **LOOK** LIKE YOU'RE GETTING READY FOR **BED!**

**OH!** MR. MONROE! **I** THOUGHT YOU WERE **NORA!**

NO, PLEASE! **COME IN!**

IT'S **NOT** A PROBLEM, ROBIN! **REALLY!** AND I WON'T TAKE **MUCH** OF YOUR TIME ANYWAY!

I'M **SORRY** ABOUT THE WAY I'M... I MEAN, **NORA** PUT ALL MY **OLD** CLOTHES IN STORAGE AND ONLY BOUGHT ME A **COUPLE** OF THINGS TO WEAR AT **NIGHT,** AND...

WELL, OKAY! THEN WHAT CAN I **DO** FOR YOU, MR. MONROE?

**BEFORE** ABBY GETS HOME, I WANTED TO **PERSONALLY** THANK YOU FOR GOING TO THE **LENGTHS** YOU HAVE IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS PLAN A **SUCCESS!**

YOUR **DEDICATION** AND **SACRIFICE** GO **WAY BEYOND** ANYTHING I INITIALLY **EXPECTED** OF YOU! **ESPECIALLY** IN THE WAY YOU'VE AGREED TO THE... **ALTERATIONS** YOU'RE UNDERGOING!

**NORA** DESERVES A **LOT** OF THE CREDIT! SHE'S **CONVINCED** ME THAT **IMMERSING** MYSELF IN THIS ROLE IS BEST FOR **ALL CONCERNED!** YOU, ME, AND, OF COURSE, **YOUR WIFE!**

AND IF MY BODY NEEDS SOME **EXTRA** TIME TO **CHANGE BACK** AFTER THE SUMMER IS OVER, WELL... **THAT'S** JUST SOMETHING I'LL **DEAL WITH** WHEN THE TIME COMES!

WELL, IF IT MAKES YOU **FEEL** ANY BETTER, YOU'LL BE DOING SO IN YOUR **OWN** APARTMENT... **WITHOUT** ANY NOSY OR ANNOYING **ROOMMATES** YOU'D HAVE TO **EXPLAIN** THINGS TO!

**WHAT** ARE YOU **SAYING?**

I HAVEN'T WORKED OUT THE **DETAILS** YET, BUT AT THE **CONCLUSION** OF YOUR SUMMER JOB YOU'LL RECEIVE **EITHER** A STIPEND **OR** SCHOLARSHIP THAT SHOULD **MORE** THAN COVER THE **COSTS** OF MAINTAINING AN **APARTMENT** ON YOUR **OWN** FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR!

**OH MY GOD!** I... I **DON'T** KNOW WHAT TO **SAY,** MR. MONROE!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING AS LONG AS YOU START CALLING ME HANK!

YOU'VE BEEN ADDRESSING THE REST OF MY FAMILY BY THEIR FIRST NAMES, SO I THINK IT'S ONLY FAIR YOU DO THE SAME FOR ME!

OF COURSE I WILL... HANK! AND THANK YOU! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

HAVE A *LOVELY* EVENING, ROBIN!

I *WILL*, HANK! AND *THANK YOU AGAIN!*

THIS IS ***HUGE!*** LIVING ***ALONE*** THIS FALL ESSENTIALLY REMOVES ***ALL*** THE ***STRESS*** I'D HAVE OF TRYING TO ***HIDE*** MY CHANGING BODY FROM EVERYONE!

ON CAMPUS, I'LL BE JUST ANOTHER ***RANDOM*** STUDENT IN ***BULKY CLOTHES*** AND A ***BALL CAP!***

AND, IF I KEEP THE ***BLONDE HAIR*** AND ***CONTACTS,*** EVEN MY ***EX-ROOMMATES*** WON'T RECOGNIZE ME!

THIS MAKES *EVERYTHING* I *COMMIT* TO THIS SUMMER *SO* MUCH EASIER!


Several days later...

DID YOU FIND THE ***PRECEDENCE*** I WAS LOOKING FOR?

THE FIRM'S LAW LIBRARY? ***GOOD LUCK*** WITH ***THAT!***

WELL, HAVE HIM CALL ME BACK AS ***SOON*** AS HE GETS ***OUT*** OF HIS ***DAMN MEETING,*** CECELIA!

NOT YET! ALL I'VE BEEN ABLE TO FIND IN THE DATABASE ***SO FAR*** IS A JUDGEMENT FROM ***2011*** THAT'S ***TANGENTIAL*** AT BEST!

SO MY ***NEXT*** STOP IS GOING ***OLD SCHOOL*** AND VENTURING INTO THE ***BASEMENT***!

**SORRY** ABOUT THAT! THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT THE **DA'S** OFFICE CAN BE A LITTLE **SLOW** WHEN IT COMES TO... WELL, PRETTY MUCH **ANYTHING!**

IF YOU THINK YOU NEED MORE **HELP** WITH THAT RESEARCH, GRAB ANOTHER **INTERN** OR TWO!

IT SURE **SOUNDS** LIKE IT!

**THANKS!** BUT I'M PRETTY SURE **I** CAN HANDLE IT!

BUT I'LL LEAVE A TRAIL OF **BREADCRUMBS,** JUST IN CASE! *GIGGLE!*


I'M HEADING IN THAT DIRECTION! MIND IF I WALK WITH YOU SO WE CAN *CHAT* A BIT?
NOT AT ALL! YOU *ARE* THE BOSS AFTER ALL!

SO, I **KNOW** YOU'VE ONLY BEEN HERE A **COUPLE** OF DAYS, BUT **HOW** DO YOU LIKE IT SO FAR?

I'M **GLAD** TO HEAR THAT, DEAR! BECAUSE **WE** ENJOY HAVING **YOU** HERE AS WELL!

***I LOVE IT!*** EVEN THOUGH I'M JUST DOING RESEARCH, BEING **IMMERSED** IN THE WORKINGS OF A **REAL** LAW FIRM, **ESPECIALLY** ONE LIKE YOURS, **REAFFIRMS** MY DECISION TO GO INTO LAW!

I THINK I'VE LEARNED **MORE** IN TWO DAYS **HERE** THAN I HAVE IN A WHOLE **SEMESTER** OF **TORTS!**

BUT I'M **HOPING** YOU'LL LEARN **MORE** HERE THAN JUST THE REAL-LIFE **APPLICATIONS** OF LEGAL THEORY!

THIS IS **ALSO** A **BUSINESS,** AND THE WAY WE **PRESENT** OURSELVES TO OUR CLIENTS AND THE PUBLIC IS **EXTREMELY** IMPORTANT..**ESPECIALLY** FOR A FIRM LIKE **OURS** WITH A MAJORITY OF **FEMALE** PARTNERS!

**NOT AT ALL,** DEAR! BUT AS YOUR MENTOR, I WANT TO **AVAIL** YOU OF **MY** EXPERTISE IN **ALL MANNERS** OF OUR PROFESSION!

YOUR **ATTIRE!**

HAVE **I** DONE SOMETHING WRONG OR **INAPPROPRIATE?**

ANY **MANNER** IN PARTICULAR?

MY **CLOTHES?** WHA... WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH THEM?

NOW, DON'T GET ME WRONG, ***THIS*** IS AN ***ADORABLE*** DRESS! BUT IT SCREAMS ***"COLLEGE INTERN"*** OR ***"TEMP"*** AT THE VERY LEAST!

I ***COMPLETELY*** UNDERSTAND, DEAR! WHICH IS WHY ***I'D*** LIKE TO TAKE YOU ***SHOPPING!***

I WAS ***AFRAID*** OF THAT! UNFORTUNATELY, I'VE NEVER HAD THE ***NEED*** FOR ANYTHING ***"PROFESSIONAL"*** TO WEAR! SO MY WARDROBE IS A LITTLE ***LACKING*** IN THAT DEPARTMENT!

***AND,*** EXCEPT FOR THE ***ONE*** OUTFIT I WORE WHEN I MET ABBY, IT'S THE ***BEST*** NORA AND I COULD COME UP WITH GIVEN SUCH ***SHORT NOTICE!***

YOU... **YOU** WANT TO TAKE **ME** SHOPPING? **REALLY?**

FOR A **COUPLE** OF OUTFITS, **THAT'S** ALL! SOMETHING TO GET YOU **STARTED!**

THAT'S **INCREDIBLY** GENEROUS OF YOU!

WELL, ABBY AND I TALKED IT OVER AND WE **BOTH** THINK YOU'RE A **WORTHY** INVESTMENT! IF NOT IN **OUR** FIRM SOMEDAY, THEN AT **LEAST** TO THE **LEGAL PROFESSION!**

I... I **DON'T** KNOW WHAT TO **SAY!**

I'LL SEE YOU THEN! AND.... **THANK YOU,** JILL!

JUST SAY YOU'LL BE READY AT **TWO O'CLOCK** ON **SUNDAY!** I'LL PICK YOU UP AT ABBY'S!

DOES **THAT** WORK FOR YOU?

WOW! JUST A COUPLE OF DAYS INTO THE JOB AND THE PARTNERS ARE ALREADY IMPLYING THEY MAY HAVE A PLACE FOR ME HERE WHEN I GRADUATE!

*SIGH!* WHO AM I KIDDING? THAT JOB'LL BE FOR ROBIN... SOMEONE WHO WON'T EVEN EXIST BY THE TIME I GRADUATE!

**JESUS!** I HAVE **GOT** TO **STOP** BEING SUCH A GODDAMN **DEFEATIST!**

RIGHT NOW, I'VE GOT MORE **FRIENDS** AND PEOPLE THAT **RESPECT** ME THAN I'VE **EVER** HAD IN MY **LIFE!** I CAN'T **RUIN** THAT BY **WORRYING** ABOUT WHAT **MAY** HAPPEN **MONTHS** DOWN THE ROAD!

EVEN IF IT **DOES** COME TO AN END **EVENTUALLY,** I **OWE** IT TO MYSELF TO LIVE **THIS** LIFE TO THE **FULLEST** WHILE I CAN!


THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL OF BEING THE MOST MEMORABLE AND ENJOYABLE SUMMER OF MY LIFE!
AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET IT GO TO WASTE!

Friday afternoon...

DO YOU NEED ME TO GET UNDRESSED AND PUT ON A **ROBE** OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

HOW **MUCH** MORE INVOLVED?

THAT **WON'T** BE NECESSARY, ROBIN!

EVEN THOUGH THIS PROCEDURE **IS** A LITTLE MORE **INVOLVED** THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE, I CAN DO **EVERYTHING** I NEED TO WITH **JUST** YOUR **TOP** OFF!

SINCE THIS ***LONGER LASTING*** METHOD MAKES USE OF A ***DIFFERENT*** COMPOUND THAN WHAT YOU'VE ALREADY GOT, WE HAVE TO ***REMOVE*** THE ***OLD*** COMPOUND FIRST!

IT'S EITHER ***THAT*** OR WAIT FOR YOUR BODY TO ***ABSORB*** IT, WHICH WILL TAKE ANOTHER COUPLE OF ***DAYS,*** BUT YOUR ***DECREASING*** SIZE WILL BE QUITE ***NOTICEABLE!***

***QUITE*** UNDERSTANDABLE! AND DON'T WORRY, THE ONLY NEEDLES YOU'LL ***FEEL*** WILL BE THE FIRST SMALL ***PINCHES*** OF THE LOCAL ANESTHESIA!

***REMOVE*** IT? YOU MEAN ***SUCK IT OUT?***

YEAH... I'D RATHER ***NOT*** HAVE TO ***EXPLAIN*** THAT!

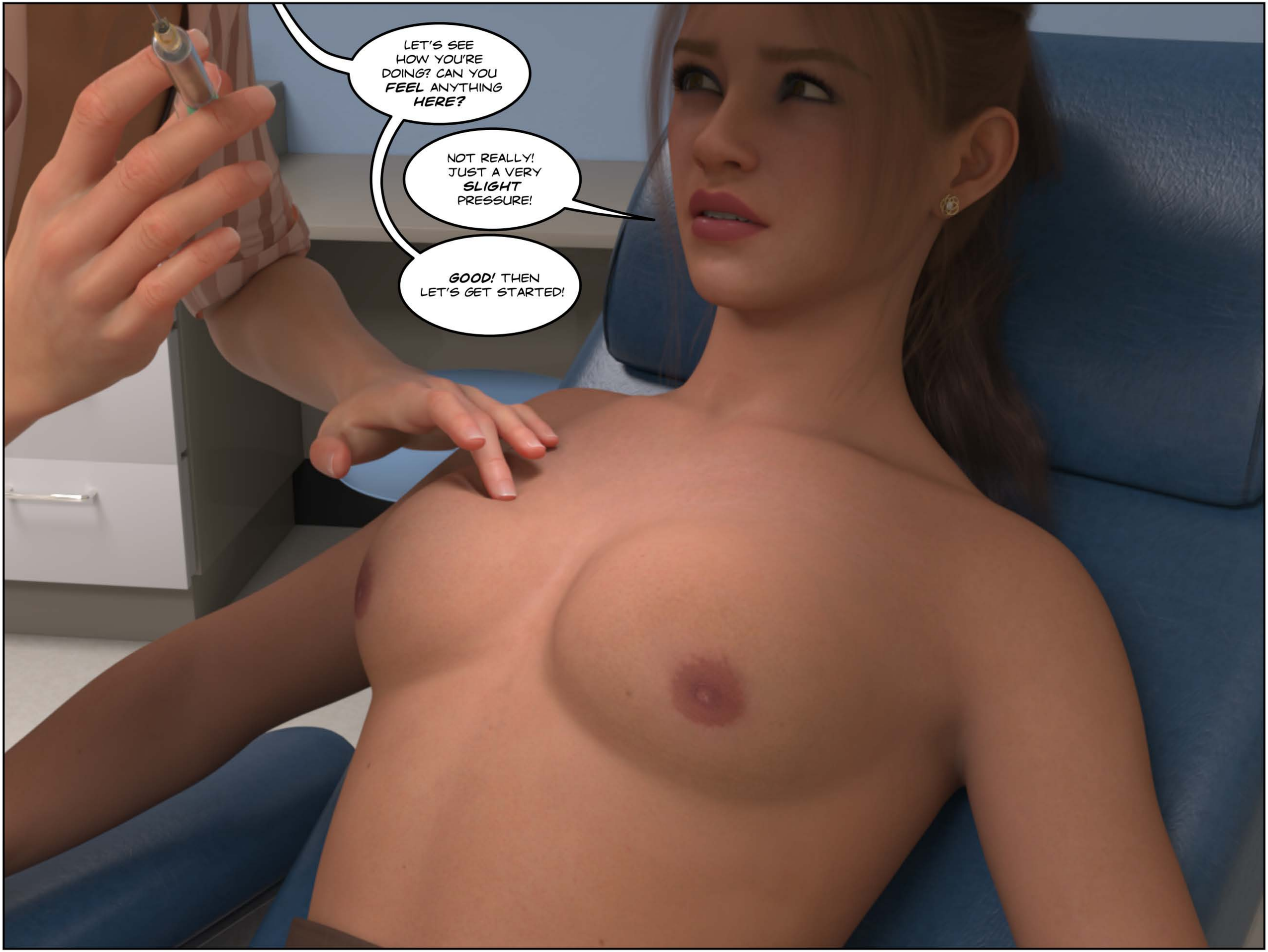

WE'LL GIVE THE ANESTHETIC A FEW MINUTES TO KICK IN BEFORE WE GET STARTED!
IT MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE WEIRD AT FIRST, BUT THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED!
OKAY!

I ***KNOW*** I AGREED TO THIS, BUT THAT STILL ***DOESN'T*** KEEP ME FROM BEING A LITTLE ***FREAKED OUT!***

BEFORE THIS SUMMER STARTED, THE MOST ***INVASIVE*** PROCEDURE I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED WAS HAVING A ***CAVITY*** FILLED! SO ***THIS*** IS ALMOST LIKE ***MAJOR SURGERY*** IN COMPARISON!

BUT... I'M ***COMMITTED*** TO THIS, AND SHE ***DOES*** SEEM TO ***KNOW*** WHAT SHE'S DOING, SO...

***DEEP BREATHS*** AND GO TO MY HAPPY PLACE!

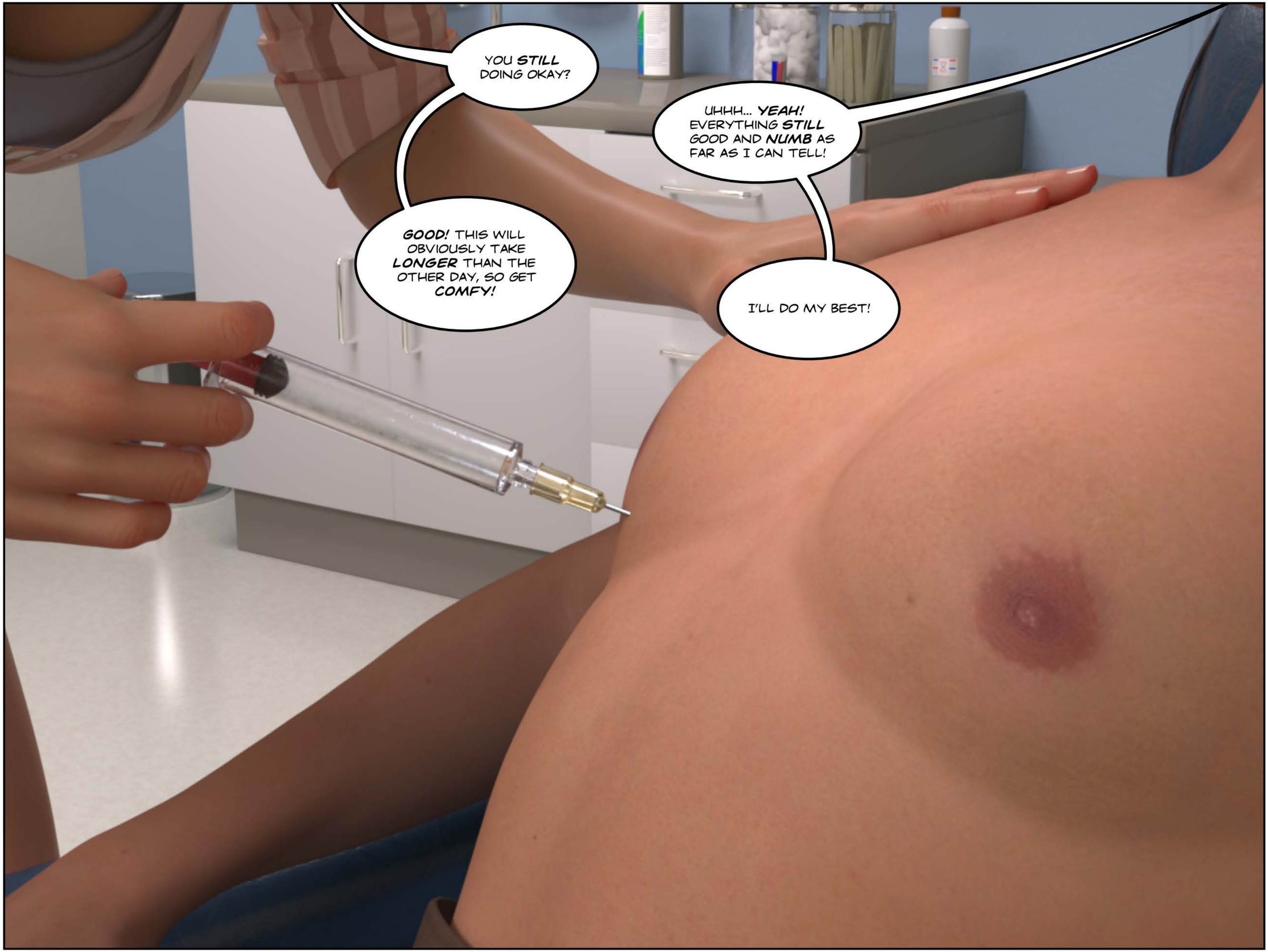

LET'S SEE HOW YOU'RE DOING? CAN YOU FEEL ANYTHING HERE?
NOT REALLY! JUST A VERY SLIGHT PRESSURE!
GOOD! THEN LET'S GET STARTED!


AFTER I INSERT THIS NEEDLE, I'M GOING TO ATTACH IT TO A TUBE WHICH WILL...
ACTUALLY, I DON'T REALLY NEED THE STEP BY STEP, IF YOU DON'T MIND!
I GET IT! SORRY!

A few minutes later...

OKAY, I'M ALL DONE REMOVING THE ***OLD*** SOLUTION!

ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF DOING IT ***THIS*** WAY IS IT LEAVES YOUR BREAST TISSUE ***STRETCHED OUT*** A LITTLE SO THE NEW ONES WILL LOOK MORE ***NATURAL!***


YOU STILL DOING OKAY?
UHHH... YEAH! EVERYTHING STILL GOOD AND NUMB AS FAR AS I CAN TELL!
GOOD! THIS WILL OBVIOUSLY TAKE LONGER THAN THE OTHER DAY, SO GET COMFY!
I'LL DO MY BEST!


A while later...
OKAY! YOUR RIGHT BREAST LOOKS WONDERFUL!
I'LL MAKE SURE YOUR LEFT ONE IS JUST AS GORGEOUS!
OKAY...




JUST A LITTLE BIT LONGER! I **REALLY** THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE **PLEASED** WITH THE RESULTS!

SO... HOW DO THEY ***FEEL?***

OF COURSE! BESIDES THE ***NORMAL SWELLING*** THAT'LL GO DOWN IN A DAY OR TWO, THE ***EXTENDED*** PROCEDURE REQUIRES ***MORE*** SOLUTION WHICH ***DOES*** RESULT IN A SLIGHT ***INCREASE*** IN CUP SIZE!

IT ***VARIES*** FROM PATIENT TO PATIENT! COME TAKE A ***LOOK!***

DEFINITELY ***BIGGER*** THAN BEFORE! IS THAT ***NORMAL?***

JUST ***HOW MUCH*** OF AN INCREASE?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

WELL, LIKE I SAID, I'VE DONE THIS ***MORE*** THAN A ***FEW*** TIMES, SO I'VE GOTTEN ***PRETTY GOOD*** AT IT!

AND THE SIZE WILL ***COME DOWN*** A LITTLE AS THEY SETTLE! WHICH IS ***WHY*** I'M GOING TO HAVE YOU WEAR A ***SPECIAL BRA*** THAT WILL HELP THEM SETTLE INTO THE ***APPROPRIATE*** SHAPE!

AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS... ***EVEN*** WHILE YOU SLEEP! I ALSO ***HIGHLY*** RECOMMEND SLEEPING ON YOUR ***BACK*** FOR AWHILE, IF YOU CAN!

***WOW!*** THEY LOOK SO... SO ***REAL!*** AND DEFINITELY ***BIGGER*** THAN BEFORE!

HOW ***LONG*** WILL I HAVE TO WEAR IT?

*SIGH!* I'LL DO MY BEST!

I'M GETTING THE ***SENSE*** THAT YOU'RE ***NOT HAPPY*** WITH THE RESULTS!

I'M ***SORRY*** IF I COME OFF THAT WAY, DOCTOR! I'M ***JUST*** A LITTLE ***SHELL-SHOCKED*** IS ALL!

I ***REALLY*** HAD ***NO IDEA*** THEY'D COME OUT LOOKING AS ***GOOD*** AS THEY DO!


WELL, I'M ***RELIEVED*** TO HEAR THAT!
WHEN YOU'RE DONE DRESSING, COME OUT TO MY OFFICE AND WE'LL SCHEDULE YOUR ***FOLLOW-UP*** APPOINTMENTS!
OKAY!

*SIGH!* MAYBE THEY'LL GO DOWN ENOUGH BY **MONDAY** THAT NO ONE AT WORK WILL **NOTICE** THE DIFFERENCE!

BUT **NORA** WILL SEE THEM **TOMORROW!** AND I HAVE A PRETTY **GOOD** IDEA WHAT **SHE'LL** SAY!


OH MY GOD! THEY'RE PERFECT!

EVERYONE'S GOING TO LOVE THEM!

*SIGH!*

That night...

OH **YEAH!** SOUNDS LIKE IT'S **HOPPIN'** IN HERE TONIGHT!

**C'MON,** YOU TWO!

**WE'RE COMING!** GO AHEAD AND GRAB A TABLE!


IF I'D KNOWN THIS PLACE REQUIRED TRAVERSING SUCH A STEEP FLIGHT OF STAIRS I WOULDN'T HAVE LET YOU TALK ME INTO THESE EXTRA HIGH HEELS... AMONG OTHER DUBIOUS CLOTHING CHOICES!
I TOLD THE GIRLS YOU'VE NEVER WORN ANYTHING HIGHER THAN 3-INCH HEELS, SO THEY UNDERSTAND! WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE!
AND AS FOR THE "OTHER" CLOTHING ITEM YOU'RE REFERRING TO, I WON'T APOLOGIZE ONE LITTLE BIT! YOU LOOK AMAZING!

AREN'T YOU ***REALLY*** SAYING ***"THEY"*** LOOK AMAZING? I MEAN, THEY'RE PRACTICALLY ***FALLING OUT*** OF THIS DRESS!

SPOKEN LIKE A ***TRUE*** NEWBIE! ***NOT*** A PROBLEM, SWEETIE! THE ***TIGHTNESS*** OF THAT DRESS WILL KEEP THEM ***RIGHT*** WHERE THEY'RE ***SUPPOSED*** TO BE!

***TELL*** ME ABOUT IT! ***NOW*** I KNOW ***WHY*** YOU SAID I ***DIDN'T*** HAVE TO WEAR MY ***BUTT SHAPER!*** EVERY SEAM WOULD'VE BEEN ***OUTLINED*** BY THIS THING!

DON'T **WORRY,** ROBIN! I DON'T THINK **TOO** MANY PEOPLE WILL BE LOOKING AT YOUR **ASS** TONIGHT ANYWAY! *GIGGLE!*

BESIDES, BETWEEN THE **HORMONES** AND THOSE **EXERCISES** YOU'VE BEEN DOING, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR VERY OWN **PERFECT** BUTT IN **NO TIME!**

OH, **GOOD!** THEY FOUND A TABLE!

EXIT

I JUST WANT TO ***REEMPHASIZE*** THAT I WILL ***NOT*** BE DOING ***ANY*** DANCING TONIGHT! ***NOT*** IN THESE ***SHOES*** AND ***NOT*** IN THIS ***DRESS!***

AND ANY ***GUY*** WHO TRIES TO ***HIT*** ON ME IS GOING TO GET ***ONE*** FUCKING ***CHILLY*** RESPONSE!

I'LL TRY! BUT ***NO PROMISES!***

***FAIR ENOUGH!*** YOUR FIRST TIME TO A DANCE CLUB ***SHOULDN'T*** BE REMEMBERED FOR ***PRATFALLS*** OR ***WARDROBE MALFUNCTIONS!***

UNDERSTANDABLE! BUT SEE IF YOU CAN AT ***LEAST*** BE A LITTLE ***LADYLIKE*** ABOUT IT!

IF IT HELPS, ***I'LL*** TURN AWAY THE FIRST ***COUPLE*** ATTEMPTS SO ***YOU*** CAN SEE ***HOW*** IT'S DONE!

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING IT AGAIN, ROBIN, BUT I THINK YOUR NEW BOOBS LOOK ***AWESOME!***

***OH!*** UHHH... THANKS... ***AGAIN!*** *GIGGLE!*

***I*** LOVE THEM, TOO! ***WHAT*** MADE YOU DECIDE TO GET THEM DONE?


WELL I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE ANY CHOICE DID I? I MEAN, AFTER HANGING OUT WITH YOU THREE ALL WEEK, I GOT TIRED OF FEELING LIKE THE UGLY AND FLAT STEPSISTER! *GIGGLE!*
NO! BUT IT SOUNDS A HECK OF A LOT BETTER THAN THE TRUTH!
THAT ISN'T REALLY THE REASON... IS IT?

IT WAS JUST A ***SPUR OF THE MOMENT*** THING! I WAS AT A REGULAR CHECK-UP WITH MY DOCTOR, SHE MADE A SUGGESTION, AND I ***WENT FOR IT!***

***WOW!*** THAT'S PRETTY ***IMPULSIVE!***

YEAH, I'VE NEVER BEEN A VERY ***SPONTANEOUS*** KIND OF PERSON, BUT I'M STARTING TO ***LEARN*** A THING OR TWO BY HANGING OUT WITH ***NORA*** OVER HERE!

OH, ***PLEASE!*** ***DON'T*** PUT THE BLAME ON ***ME!***

I'M *100% CONVINCED* THERE'S BEEN A *SEXY* LITTLE *FIRECRACKER* INSIDE YOU *ALL ALONG* JUST *DYING* TO GET OUT!

AND HANGING WITH *US* JUST GAVE HER AN *EXCUSE* TO *FINALLY* LET HER *FREAK FLAG FLY!* *GIGGLE!*

NOW... *WHO* WANTS TO GO UP TO THE BAR WITH ME AND GET THE *DRINKS?*

I WILL!

ME TOO!


KEEP OUR SEATS WARM FOR US, ROBIN! WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
BY THE WAY, I MEANT EVERYTHING I JUST SAID ABOUT YOU!
YOU... YOU DID?
UH-HUH! EVERY SINGLE WORD!

C'MON, LADIES! I THINK I'VE ALREADY SPOTTED A COUPLE OF GUYS WHO DESPERATELY WANT TO BUY OUR DRINKS FOR US! *GIGGLE!*

NORA ACTUALLY THINKS THIS IS WHO I WANT TO BE?

SHE SAID THE BEST WAY TO BE BELIEVABLE WAS TO LIVE THE PART, AND I THOUGHT I WAS NAILING IT!

BUT NOW SHE'S IMPLYING I'M NOT JUST ACTING! IS SHE ACTUALLY SERIOUS?

OH, *I* SEE WHAT SHE'S DOING! THIS IS DEFINITELY HER ***BIZARRE*** VERSION OF A ***PEP TALK!***

SHE'S ***CLEARLY*** NOTICED MY ***HORMONE-INDUCED*** CRABBINESS THESE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS AND WANTS TO ***CHEER ME UP*** SO I DON'T ***TORPEDO*** THE EVENING!

BY SUGGESTING I'VE ***ALWAYS*** SECRETLY ***WANTED*** TO BE A WOMAN, SHE'S TRYING TO GIVE MY EGO A ***MASSIVE BOOST,*** MAKING ME ***THINK*** MY PERFORMANCE IS ***SO GOOD*** IT'S ***EVEN*** CONVINCED ***HER!***

***WOW!*** HER GOING TO SUCH ***ELABORATE*** LENGTHS JUST TO MAKE ***ME*** FEEL BETTER ***REALLY*** SPEAKS ***VOLUMES*** ABOUT OUR FRIENDSHIP!

AND HONESTLY, IF ***SHE'S*** GOING TO ***ALL*** THAT TROUBLE FOR ***ME,*** WHAT KIND OF FRIEND WOULD ***I*** BE IF I DIDN'T ***RETURN*** THE FAVOR?

IF SHE WANTS ***ME*** TO BELIEVE ***I'M*** SUCH A ***PHENOMENAL*** ACTOR, WHY NOT LET ***HER*** THINK ***SHE'S*** UNEARTHED MY ***DEEPEST,*** MOST ***HIDDEN DESIRE*** TO BE A ***REAL*** WOMAN?

FOR A ***FEW*** DAYS, AT LEAST! ***MAYBE*** A WEEK OR ***TWO***... WHO KNOWS? *GIGGLE!*

HERE YOU GO, SWEETIE! ONE VIRGIN **MAI-TAI!**

**THANKS,** NORA!

A **CHOICE,** ACTUALLY!

YOU KNOW, IT **JUST** OCCURRED TO ME THAT I **RARELY** SEE YOU DRINK ANYTHING WITH **BOOZE** IN IT!

IS THAT JUST A **COINCIDENCE?**

BOTH MY PARENTS WERE ***ALCOHOLICS!*** SO I MADE A ***PROMISE*** TO MYSELF A ***LONG*** TIME AGO THAT I'D ***NEVER*** WIND UP LIKE ***THEM!*** THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS KEEP MY DRINKING TO A ***MINIMUM!***

***OH!*** I'M SO ***SORRY*** FOR BRINGING THAT UP!

NOT TO WORRY! I CAME TO TERMS WITH IT A ***LONG*** TIME AGO!

AND IT DOESN'T ***BOTHER*** YOU WHEN ***OTHERS*** DRINK AROUND YOU?

WE'RE IN A ***BAR!*** I'D ***BETTER*** BE OKAY WITH IT! *GIGGLE!*


WHICH OF YOU LOVELY LADIES WOULD LIKE TO DANCE?
I THINK I COULD BE TALKED INTO IT!
ME TOO!

AND YOU TWO?

WE'RE GOING TO SIT AND CHAT FOR AWHILE! ANOTHER TIME MAYBE!

LIKE I SAID... ANOTHER TIME!

HEY, WE KNOW HOW TO CHAT! CAN WE JOIN YOU?

AND ***THERE YOU GO!*** IT'S JUST ***THAT*** EASY!

AND IF THEY'RE ***NOT*** THAT ***AGREEABLE?***

THEN YOU REPLACE THE ***SMILE*** WITH RESTING ***BITCH*** FACE AND MAKE ***SURE*** THE NEXT COUPLE OF TABLES ***HEAR*** YOU TELL HIM TO ***FUCK OFF!***

JUST LIKE ***THAT,*** HUH?

YEP! ***JUST*** LIKE THAT!

**SERIOUSLY,** THOUGH... MOST REPUTABLE PLACES, LIKE **THIS** ONE, **TRAIN** THEIR WAIT STAFF TO BE ON THE **LOOKOUT** FOR **CREEPS!**

LETTING TOXIC **ALPHA-MALES** ROAM FREE AND **HARASS WOMEN** IS **BAD** FOR **BUSINESS!** AND THEY **DAMN WELL KNOW IT!**

BUT **YOU** PROBABLY **WON'T** HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT SINCE YOU'LL **ALWAYS** BE HANGING OUT WITH **US** FOR THE REST OF THE SUMMER!

AND AS LONG AS YOU'RE WITH **US,** WE'LL KEEP THE **DOUCHEBAGS** AT **ARMS LENGTH** FOR YOU!

I **APPRECIATE** HOW YOU WANT TO MAKE ALL THIS AS **EASY** FOR ME AS POSSIBLE, NORA, BUT AT **SOME** POINT, I NEED TO BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF **MYSELF!**

BECAUSE **YOU** MAY BE **RIGHT** ABOUT ME! MAYBE THE **REASON** I'M SO **GOOD** AT BEING ROBIN IS BECAUSE DEEP DOWN **SHE'S** WHO I'VE ALWAYS **REALLY BEEN!**

AND IF THAT **IS** THE CASE, THEN I'LL BE HAVING TO DEAL WITH GUYS FOR A LOT **LONGER** THAN JUST THE NEXT COUPLE OF **MONTHS!**

POSSIBLY THE **REST** OF MY **LIFE!**

YEAH... **YOU'RE** NOT THE **ONLY** ACTOR IN **THIS** BOOTH! *CHUCKLE!*

I HAD A **FEELING!** YOU WERE JUST **TOO PERFECT** AT BEING A WOMAN FOR IT TO BE AN **ACT!**

SO IF **THIS** IS THE JOURNEY YOU **WANT** TO TAKE, REST ASSURED **I'LL** BE THERE **EVERY STEP OF THE WAY** FOR YOU!

**THANK YOU,** NORA! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW **MUCH** THAT MEANS TO ME!


Later...

YOU KNOW, YOU HAVE BEEN **BABYSITTING** ME **LONG ENOUGH!** YOU'RE **DYING** TO DANCE AND YOU **KNOW** IT!

SO GO GRAB ONE OF THOSE **CUTE GUYS** THAT HAVE BEEN **OGLING** YOU ALL NIGHT AND HAVE SOME **FUN!**

**I'LL** BE JUST **FINE** HERE!

YOU **SURE?**

**GO!**


THAT SURE DIDN'T TAKE LONG! *GIGGLE!*

HMMM! I JUST REALIZED THAT *"COMING OUT"* TO NORA LIKE THIS MAY TAKE A LOT OF THE *STRESS* OUT OF MY LIFE THIS SUMMER!

NOW THAT SHE BELIEVES I'M *ACTUALLY* TRANSITIONING, SHE MAY *NOT* BE AS QUICK TO *CRITICIZE* ANY FEMININE *FAUX PAS* I MIGHT MAKE!

I JUST HOPE SHE DOESN'T GET ***TOO*** UPSET WHEN I EVENTUALLY TELL HER THAT THIS ***HAS*** BEEN AN ***ACT*** ALL ALONG!

AND IF SHE ***DOES*** GET PISSED AT ME, WILL IT BE BECAUSE ***I*** SAW THROUGH ***HER*** ACT OR SHE ***DIDN'T*** SEE THROUGH ***MINE?***

GUESS WE'LL ***FIND OUT*** LATER THIS SUMMER!

HEY THERE, GORGEOUS! YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE SOME COMPANY!

*SIGH!* WELL, I WAS DUE FOR MY FIRST SOLO AT SOME POINT! MIGHT AS WELL GET IT OVER WITH!

ACTUALLY, I WAS KIND OF ENJOYING MY ALONE TIME! SO IF YOU DON'T MIND...

DO I MIND **JOINING** YOU? **NOT AT ALL,** PRETTY LADY!

EITHER YOU'RE **HARD OF HEARING** OR HAVE A **LEARNING IMPEDIMENT,** SO I'LL TRY THIS **AGAIN,** BUT **VERY SLOWLY...**

I DO **NOT** WANT YOUR COMPANY! SO **PLEASE LEAVE!**

YEAH, THAT'S WHAT **ALL** YOU CHICKS SAY AT FIRST! BUT YOU **NEVER** REALLY **MEAN** IT! HEH-HEH!

OH, **REALLY?!**


WHAT TH' FUCK?!
OOPS! SORRY! I DIDN'T REALLY MEAN TO DO THAT!
Smack!


YOU FUCKIN' BITCH!
YES... YES, I AM! *GIGGLE!*
THAT WAS VERY SATISFYING! AND A LITTLE INVIGORATING!

OH... WHY THE HELL NOT?

HEY THERE! I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO DO ANY DANCING TONIGHT!

ISN'T IT A GIRL'S PREROGATIVE TO CHANGE HER MIND? *GIGGLE!*

DAMN RIGHT IT IS! JOIN THE FUN, GIRLFRIEND!

OH MAN, THAT WAS ***PRECIOUS!*** SAW THE ***WHOLE THING*** FROM ***HERE!***

SHOULD I ORDER YOU ANOTHER ***BEER,*** MAN, OR ARE YOU JUST GONNA WEAR ***THAT*** ONE HOME ***HA-HA!***

***FUCK YOU,*** MAN!

HEY, I ***TOLD*** YOU SHE ***WASN'T*** GOING TO BE A ***PUSHOVER,*** DUDE!

GUESS I SHOULD'VE **TOLD** YOU **WE** RAN INTO THAT **BALL-BUSTER** LAST WEEK! AND IT **DIDN'T** GO MUCH **BETTER** FOR **US!**

'COURSE **WE** CAME AWAY WITH OUR PANTS **AND** DIGNITY **INTACT! HEH-HEH!**

YEAH, WELL... **I'M** NOT LIKE **YOU** LOSERS!

"'Cause eventually, ***one way*** or ***another, I'm*** gonna get a ***piece*** of that!"

The next day...

VARSECE

VARSECE

THERE'S **ONE MORE** PLACE DOWN THE STREET I WANT YOU TO LOOK THROUGH BEFORE WE CALL IT A DAY!

**FIRST** RULE OF THUMB WHEN SHOPPING... IF YOU'VE **STILL** GOT A **FREE** HAND, YOU **HAVEN'T** BOUGHT ENOUGH!

AND **I** STILL **HAVE** A FREE HAND! SO, **ONE MORE STOP** IT IS!

HONESTLY, JILL... YOU'VE **ALREADY** BOUGHT **WAY**TOO MUCH FOR ME AS IT IS!

BESIDES, I DON'T THINK I CAN **CARRY** MUCH MORE!

*SIGH!* THE DEFENSE **CONCEDES** THE POINT! *GIGGLE!*


INCLUDING YOU? ONE!
LIKE I SAID THE OTHER DAY, ABBY AND I BOTH THINK YOU'RE AN EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG LADY AND A WORTHY INVESTMENT!
SO, JILL... HOW MANY SUMMER INTERNS HAVE YOU TAKEN SHOPPING OVER THE YEARS?
I'M THE ONLY ONE? REALLY? WELL... WHY ME AND NOT THE OTHERS?

AS TO WHY WE NEVER TREATED ANY OF THE ***OTHER*** INTERNS THIS WAY... WELL, TO BE ***TRUTHFUL,*** I BARELY ***REMEMBER*** ANY OF THEM!

THEY ***ALL*** SEEMED TO COME FROM THE SAME ***UNREMARKABLE*** MOLD! THEY SHOWED UP, DID A ***SO-SO*** JOB AND DID NOTHING TO ***DISTINGUISH*** THEMSELVES!

***YOU,*** ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE SHOWN MORE ***DRIVE*** AND ***RESOURCEFULNESS*** IN YOUR ***FIRST WEEK*** THAN ANY OF ***THEM*** DID OVER AN ***ENTIRE SUMMER!***

AND THE FACT THAT ***YOU'VE*** GOTTEN YOURSELF HERE ***WITHOUT*** THE HELP OF A ***RICH FAMILY*** OR ***SORORITY CONNECTIONS*** SPEAKS ***VOLUMES*** ABOUT YOU!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO **SAY ANYTHING,** DEAR! BUT WE **DO** WANT YOU TO **THINK** ABOUT SPENDING **EVERY** SUMMER WITH US UNTIL YOU GRADUATE!

**WOW!** NO ONE HAS **EVER** HAD SO MUCH **FAITH** IN ME BEFORE! I... I DON'T KNOW **WHAT** TO SAY!

OF... OF **COURSE** I WILL!

OH MY GOD! THAT'S THE SECOND TIME SHE'S SUGGESTED I HAVE A FUTURE WITH HER FIRM!

I WONDER IF THEY'LL FEEL THE SAME WHEN I "CONFESS" THAT I'M A TRANSWOMAN?

AND IF THEY DO, WOULD THEIR OFFER STILL EXTEND TO ME IF... I MEAN, WHEN I RETURN TO BEING ROBERT?

I CAN'T IMAGINE IT WOULD! BUT IT'S NICE TO DREAM!

I HAVE TO ASK, DEAR... DID YOU HAVE A ***HOT DATE*** THIS WEEKEND?

WELL, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A VERY ***OBSERVANT*** PERSON AND NOTICED ***YOU'VE*** GONE ***UP*** AT LEAST A ***CUP SIZE*** SINCE I SAW YOU FRIDAY!

I JUST ***ASSUMED*** IT WAS TO ***IMPRESS*** SOMEONE! AM I WRONG?

***WHAT?*** UHH... ***NO!*** NO, I DIDN'T! ***WHAT*** MAKES YOU THINK I ***DID?***

I'M NOT **TRYING** TO **EMBARRASS** YOU, DEAR! I'M JUST... **CURIOUS!**

ARE THOSE THE **"VACATION BOOBS"** I'VE READ ABOUT?

OH MY GOD! I WAS **WONDERING** IF YOU'D NOTICE OR NOT!

IT'S JUST... SOMETHING I'M **TRYING OUT** FOR AWHILE!

UMMM, **YEAH!** MY DOCTOR GAVE THEM TO ME FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS TO SEE IF I **LIKED** BEING A LITTLE... **BIGGER!**

5th Avenue

WELL *I* THINK THEY LOOK ***ADORABLE,*** DEAR!

PERSONALLY, *I* THINK ***YOUR*** FRAME COULD HANDLE EVEN ***MORE,*** BUT THAT'S JUST ***ME!***

YOU DO ***WHATEVER*** MAKES ***YOU*** FEEL RIGHT!

***SMART GIRL!***

***THANK*** YOU! *I* KIND OF LIKE THEM, TOO!

THEY SURE ***BEAT*** THE ***ALTERNATIVE!***

I... I ***WILL!*** BUT I'LL ***ALSO*** TAKE YOUR ADVICE INTO ACCOUNT THE ***NEXT*** TIME I SEE MY DOCTOR! *GIGGLE!*

I'M ***JUST*** STARTING TO GET USED TO***THESE*** AND ***SHE*** WANTS ME TO GO ***BIGGER? NO THANK YOU,*** JILL!

That evening...

"ONE MORE STOP", SHE SAID!

SHE CONVENIENTLY LEFT OUT THE "ON THIS STREET" PART!

*SIGH!* I'M GOING TO NEED A BIGGER CLOSET!

I'M **HARDLY** COMPLAINING, THOUGH! NO ONE HAS **EVER** SPENT **THIS** MUCH MONEY ON ME BEFORE!

WELL, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF **HANK** WHO'S PAID FOR ALL MY **ORIGINAL** CLOTHES, **IDENTIFICATION,** AND **DOCTOR'S VISITS!**

**CHRIST!** THESE PEOPLE HAVE ALL BENT OVER **BACKWARDS** TO WELCOME **ME** INTO THEIR LIVES!

THEY'RE **QUICKLY** BECOMING THE ONLY **TRUE FAMILY** I'VE **EVER** KNOWN!

AND **ONE** THING I'VE **LEARNED** ABOUT FAMILY IS I **DON'T** LIKE **LYING** TO THEM!

HANK SAID HE WANTED TO ***WAIT*** A FEW ***WEEKS*** BEFORE TELLING ABBY I WAS A TRANSWOMAN, BUT KEEPING ***SO MUCH*** FROM HER AND JILL IS ***KILLING*** ME!

I WONDER IF HE'D LET ME TELL THEM ***SOONER...*** LIKE THIS WEEK, OR EVEN ***TOMORROW?***

KNOWING ***THOSE*** TWO, LEARNING THE *"TRUTH"* ABOUT ME WON'T MAKE ***ANY*** DIFFERENCE TO ***THEM*** WHATSOEVER!

SO AS FAR AS ***I'M*** CONCERNED, THE ***SOONER*** THEY KNOW, THE ***BETTER!***

PROBLEM **IS,** THOUGH, THIS IS AN ***EXTENDED*** CONVERSATION I'D NEED TO HAVE WITH HANK, AND WITH **ABBY** BEING HOME, ***TONIGHT*** JUST ***ISN'T*** POSSIBLE!

AND A PROLONGED ***PHONE CALL*** DURING THE DAY ***TOMORROW*** WOULD NOT ONLY ***INTERFERE*** WITH MY WORK, BUT MIGHT ***ALSO*** LOOK A LITTLE ***SUSPICIOUS!***

*SIGH!* I ***REALLY*** NEED TO GET AT LEAST ***SOME*** OF THIS OFF MY CHEST IN THE ***NEXT*** COUPLE OF DAYS OR ***I'M*** GOING TO GO ***CRAZY!***

THERE'S ***GOT*** TO BE ***SOME*** WAY I CAN...

I'VE GOT IT!



HELLO, **NORA?** THIS IS ROBIN!

I HAVE A ***HUGE*** FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU!

The next morning...

GOOD MORNING, NORA!

YES! SHE AND ROBIN LEFT ABOUT A HALF HOUR AGO!

MORNING, UNCLE HANK! HAS AUNT ABBY LEFT YET?

YOU SAID YOU HAD SOMETHING ***IMPORTANT*** TO TALK ABOUT REGARDING ***ROBIN!*** IS ANYTHING ***WRONG?***

THEN WHAT'S THE ***EMERGENCY?***

ON THE CONTRARY, EVERYTHING'S GOING VERY. ***VERY*** WELL!

ROBIN'S DOING AN ***AMAZING*** JOB LEARNING TO FIT IN BOTH AT WORK ***AND*** SOCIALLY!

ROBIN DOESN'T WANT TO WAIT A FEW **WEEKS** TO TELL AUNT ABBY SHE'S A TRANSWOMAN! **SHE** WANTS TO TELL HER **NOW!**

**ALREADY?** DID SHE SAY **WHY?**

SHE SAID SHE'S GROWN **VERY CLOSE** TO **BOTH** AUNT ABBY AND HER PARTNER, JILL! AND SHE FEELS THAT KEEPING THE **TRUTH** FROM THEM IS **BETRAYING** THEIR TRUST!

SHE **REALLY** FEELS THAT WAY?

SHE **DOES!**

WHY DIDN'T SHE TELL ME THIS HERSELF?

SHE WANTED TO, BUT WITH ABBY HOME WITH YOU ALL WEEKEND, SHE DIDN'T HAVE THE CHANCE!

I GUESS USING YOU AS AN INTERMEDIARY MAKES SENSE! ANY EXCESSIVE CONTACT BETWEEN HER AND ME COULD SEEM SUSPICIOUS ON VARIOUS LEVELS!

SO, WHAT SHOULD I TELL HER?

TELL HER TO GO AHEAD **WHENEVER** SHE FEELS **READY** TO! AND MAKE **SURE** SHE ALSO INCLUDES THE FACT THAT **I KNEW** SHE WAS A TRANSWOMAN WHEN I **HIRED** HER!

IF, ON THE **OUTSIDE CHANCE,** ABBY GETS **UPSET** WITH THE NEWS, I WANT **HER** TO BE UPSET WITH **ME... NOT ROBIN!**

I KNOW! I JUST WANT TO MAKE **SURE** THAT ANY **HINT** OF **DECEPTION** ORIGINATES FROM **ME** AND **ME ALONE!**

OH, THERE'S **NO WAY** SHE'D **EVER** GET MAD AT ROBIN FOR THIS!

IT WILL BE GOOD TO GET ***THIS*** PART OF OUR STORY OUT IN THE ***OPEN!*** IT'S ***ONE LESS*** THING TO KEEP ***HIDDEN*** FROM YOUR AUNT!

I JUST ***PRAY*** TO ***GOD*** SHE ***NEVER*** LEARNS THE ***FULL*** TRUTH ABOUT OUR ***MISS*** SULLIVAN!

***WHAT*** DO YOU MEAN?

***THAT*** MAY NO LONGER BE AN ***ISSUE!***

I HAD A LITTLE ***HEART TO HEART*** WITH ROBIN THE OTHER NIGHT AND SHE ALL BUT ***CONFIRMED*** WHAT I'D ***SUSPECTED*** ABOUT HER FROM ***DAY ONE!***

WHICH IS?

THAT SHE REALLY ***IS*** A ***TRANSWOMAN*** AND IS ***SERIOUSLY*** CONSIDERING LIVING THE ***REST*** OF HER LIFE AS "ROBIN SULLIVAN"!

YOU'RE ***SURE*** ABOUT THIS?

LET'S JUST SAY MY ***CONFIDENCE*** LEVEL IS HOVERING AROUND **98** ***PERCENT!***

OUTSTANDING! THAT MEANS MY INITIAL GUT FEELING ABOUT HER WAS CORRECT AS WELL! AND THE ONLY REAL INDISCRETION I'VE COMMITTED WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY TELLING ABBY THE TRUTH ABOUT ROBIN BEING A TRANSWOMAN!

THIS WHOLE PLAN I CONCOCTED AROUND ROBIN IS NO LONGER A FABRICATION, BUT A REALITY!

WE WERE NEVER GOING TO GIVE OUT HER NAME ANYWAY, SO THAT ISN'T A PROBLEM!

MAYBE! BUT KEEP IN MIND, NOW THAT'S SHE'S HAD THIS REVELATION, SHE MAY NOT WANT TO GO PUBLIC ABOUT IT!

AS YOU KNOW, MY POWERS OF **DISCRETION** ARE **LEGENDARY,** NORA DEAR!

UNTIL **SHE** TELLS ME HERSELF, **I** KNOW ABSOLUTELY **NOTHING** ABOUT HER DECISION!

WELL I'M **GLAD** YOU'RE SO **HAPPY** ABOUT THIS! BUT REMEMBER, SHE **TOLD** ME THIS IN **CONFIDENCE,** SO **DON'T** LET ON THAT **YOU** KNOW!

**AWESOME!**

ONE OF US WILL CALL YOU *AFTER* ROBIN SPILLS THE BEANS SO *YOU* WON'T BE *BLINDSIDED* BY AUNT ABBY!

HAVE A GOOD DAY, UNK! *LOVE YOU!*

I'D *APPRECIATE* THAT!

LOVE YOU, TOO, DEAR!

*SIGH!* THANKS TO ***THOSE*** TWO, ABBY'S ***NOMINATION*** IS ESSENTUALLY ***IN THE BAG!***

I DON'T KNOW ***HOW*** I'LL ***EVER*** REPAY THEM... BUT I WILL! ***NO MATTER WHAT!***

Later that afternoon...

I'VE BEEN ON PINS AND NEEDLES **ALL DAY** SINCE NORA CALLED AND GAVE ME HANK'S OFFICIAL **OKEY-DOKEY!**

I'M HAPPY HE SO READILY **AGREED** WITH MY DECISION, BUT NOW THE **REALITY** OF THE SITUATION IS SINKING IN!

EXACTLY **HOW DO** I TELL ABBY AND JILL THAT I'M **NOT** THE WOMAN THEY **THINK** I AM?

IT'S **NOT** LIKE I CAN JUST **WALK UP** TO THEM AND SAY, "OH, BY THE WAY, I'M NOT **REALLY** A WOMAN! **SORRY** I DIDN'T TELL YOU **SOONER!**"

THESE TWO WOMEN HAVE OPENED UP THEIR **HEARTS** AND LET **ME** INTO THEIR LIVES! THE **LAST** THING I WANT TO DO IS **DISAPPOINT** THEM!

BUT I **HAVE** TO TELL THEM... THERE'S **NO OTHER WAY!** AND **WHATEVER** HAPPENS AFTERWARD, I'LL JUST **HAVE** TO **ACCEPT!**

AND NOW THAT **ABBY** HAS FINALLY RETURNED FROM COURT, I HAVE THE **PERFECT** OPPORTUNITY TO WALK IN THERE AND TELL THEM **BOTH** THE TRUTH!

IF ONLY I COULD GET MY **LEGS** TO **AGREE** WITH THAT PLAN!


SUCK IT UP, ROBIN! IT'S NOW OR NEVER!

SO **YOU** THINK WE'LL HAVE A ***FAVORABLE*** VERDICT?

***I'M*** CONFIDENT! BUT WHO ***KNOWS*** WHAT THE ***JURY'S*** GOING TO DECIDE!

UMM, ***EXCUSE*** ME, JILL AND ABBY! COULD I ***TALK*** TO THE TWO OF YOU FOR A FEW MINUTES?

WHY, ***OF COURSE,*** ROBIN DEAR! THIS SOUNDS ***SERIOUS!*** IS ANYTHING ***WRONG?***

WELL, THAT KIND OF ***DEPENDS*** ON HOW YOU TWO ***REACT*** TO WHAT ***I*** WANT TO DISCUSS!

I'M ***INTRIGUED!*** LET'S GO TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM, SO WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE MORE ***PRIVACY!***


SO, ROBIN, TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON!
AND REMEMBER, WE'RE A FAMILY HERE! YOU CAN TELL US ANYTHING!
I'M... KIND OF COUNTING ON THAT!

WELL I GUESS THE ***BEST*** WAY TO DO THIS IS TO JUST COME RIGHT OUT AND ***SAY IT!***

THERE'S ***SOMETHING*** ABOUT ME I'VE BEEN ***KEEPING*** FROM YOU! SOMETHING I ***SHOULD*** HAVE TOLD YOU ON ***DAY ONE!***

YOU'RE NOT IN TROUBLE, ***ARE*** YOU, DEAR? WE ***ARE*** A ***LAW*** FIRM AFTER ALL! WE CAN ***HELP!***

***NO,*** IT... IT'S ***NOTHING*** LIKE ***THAT!***

YOU SEE I... I WASN'T ***BORN*** A WOMAN! I'M... I'M A ***TRANSWOMAN!***




SO, WHAT DO WE DO? BUY EACH OTHER DINNER?
THAT KIND OF DEFEATS THE PURPOSE OF THE BET, DOESN'T IT?
WH... WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT BET?

WE HAD A **BET** OVER WHO **YOU'D** TELL **FIRST!** THE LOSER HAD TO BUY THE WINNER **DINNER** AT A RESTAURANT OF HER CHOICE!

BUT THEN **YOU** WENT AND **SPOILED** IT BY TELLING US **BOTH** AT THE **SAME TIME!**

YOU... YOU **KNEW? HOW?!**

LET ME ASK YOU THIS, DEAR! DID MY ***HUSBAND*** KNOW?

YES! HE, UMMM... FIGURED IT OUT ***BEFORE*** HE HIRED ME!

***HE*** THOUGHT WE SHOULD ***WAIT*** TO TELL YOU SINCE ***YOU*** HAD SO ***MUCH*** GOING ON WITH YOUR TRIAL AND EVERYTHING!

WELL WASN'T THAT THOUGHTFUL OF HIM.

ROBIN DEAR, MY HUSBAND IS A VERY ***SMART*** MAN AND I LOVE HIM VERY, ***VERY*** MUCH! BUT HE ***STILL*** DOESN'T QUITE ***GRASP*** THE FACT THAT I'M ***SMARTER*** THAN ***HE*** IS!

IF ***HE*** COULD FIGURE OUT THE ***TRUTH*** ABOUT YOU, WHAT MAKES HIM THINK ***I*** COULDN'T?

SINCE THAT ***FIRST*** AFTERNOON WE MET! YOU WERE ***VERY*** CONVINCING, BUT I'VE WORKED WITH A ***LOT*** OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AND HAVE LEARNED HOW TO ***PICK UP*** ON SOME OF THE SIGNS!

HOW ***LONG*** HAVE YOU KNOWN?

IF IT MAKES YOU ***FEEL*** ANY BETTER, ***I*** DIDN'T NOTICE UNTIL ***AFTER*** ABBY ***TOLD*** ME!

BUT, TO BE FAIR, MY ***CONTACTS*** WERE GIVING ME A HARD TIME FOR THOSE FIRST FEW DAYS!

***THAT'S*** MY STORY AND I'M ***STICKING*** TO IT!

OH HONEY, OF ***COURSE NOT!*** WHO YOU ***ARE*** AND WHO YOU ***WANT*** TO BE IS YOUR ***OWN*** PERSONAL BUSINESS!

BUT THE FACT THAT YOU FELT ***SAFE*** ENOUGH TO ***SHARE*** THIS WITH ***US*** MEANS THE ***WORLD*** TO US!

SO... YOU'RE NOT ***UPSET*** WITH ME FOR ***KEEPING*** THIS FROM YOU?

I'M JUST SORRY I ***KEPT*** IT FROM YOU FOR AS ***LONG*** AS I DID!

ACTUALLY ***I'M*** A LITTLE UPSET WITH THE ***WAY*** YOU TOLD US! I WAS ***REALLY*** LOOKING FORWARD TO BEING TREATED TO A ***NIGHT OUT*** BY MY ***SENIOR*** PARTNER!

*SIGH!* I ***GUESS*** I CAN LIVE WITH THAT! *CHUCKLE!*

WELL, HOW ABOUT ***INSTEAD*** THE TWO OF ***US*** TAKE ***ROBIN*** OUT TO DINNER? TO CELEBRATE HER ***"COMING OUT"*** TO US!


*SNIFF!* YOU TWO REALLY ARE THE BEST!
OF COURSE WE ARE, DEAR!
NONE BETTER!

A week later...

YEAH, I'M **NOT** IMAGINING IT! THE HORMONES ARE **DEFINITELY** BEGINNING TO HAVE A **NOTICEABLE** EFFECT!

IT'S EITHER **THAT** OR THE SALINE INJECTIONS IN MY BOOBS ARE **SPONTANEOUSLY** EXPANDING **ALL** ON THEIR OWN!

AND EXERCISES **ALONE** AREN'T RESPONSIBLE FOR **THAT** ASS!

I'M NOT SURE, BUT I THINK MY **HIPS** ARE **ALSO** A BIT WIDER!

THAT **WOULD** EXPLAIN THE **ACHES** AND **PAINS** I'VE BEEN HAVING DOWN THERE RECENTLY!

WELL, DOCTOR JOHNSON'S BEEN ***RIGHT*** ABOUT EVERYTHING SO FAR, SO THAT'S ***ENCOURAGING***... I GUESS!

BUT I'M ***ONLY*** A COUPLE OF ***WEEKS*** INTO THE SUMMER, WHICH MAKES ME WONDER HOW ***MUCH*** I'LL BE CHANGED BY ***AUGUST*** AND HOW ***LONG*** IT'LL TAKE FOR THE EFFECTS TO ***WEAR OFF!***

AND IT'S ***NOT*** LIKE I CAN JUST TELL HER TO ***TAPER OFF*** ON THE HORMONES! THAT WOULD IMPLY I DON'T ***REALLY*** PLAN ON GOING ***THROUGH*** WITH MY "TRANSITION"!

AND ***NO ONE*** BESIDES ME, NORA AND HANK CAN ***KNOW*** THAT UNTIL THE SUMMER ENDS!

CORRECTION... I **FORGOT** I'VE GOT **NORA** THINKING THAT "ROBIN" **MIGHT** BE HERE TO **STAY!** SOMETHING I SHOULD PROBABLY **CORRECT** ONE OF THESE DAYS!

BUT THEN AGAIN, SHE **MAY** HAVE SEEN **THROUGH** MY ACT AND IS KEEPING **QUIET** ABOUT IT SO I'LL **KEEP** BELIEVING **I'M** AN **AWESOME** ACTOR TOO!

*SIGH!* I GUESS AS FAR AS **NORA'S** CONCERNED, THE "TRUTH" IS JUST A MATTER OF **WHO** GIVES IN **FIRST!**

BUT ABBY AND JILL ARE ***ANOTHER*** MATTER ***COMPLETELY!*** WHAT THE ***HELL*** WILL I TELL ***THEM*** WHEN THE TIME COMES?

WHEN I AGREED TO DO THIS, I HAD ***NO IDEA*** I'D GET SO EMOTIONALLY ***ATTACHED*** TO THE PEOPLE INVOLVED!

THEY'VE TAKEN ***ME*** UNDER THEIR WING AND ***ALL*** BUT ***OFFERED*** ME A ***FUTURE*** WITH THEIR FIRM!

***HOW*** WILL THEY ***REACT*** WHEN I EVENTUALLY TELL THEM *"ROBIN"* WAS A ***MISTAKE***.. A ***FAILED EXPERIMENT***...AND SHE ***WON'T*** BE COMING ***BACK?***

BUT MAYBE **HANK** HAS **ALREADY** FIGURED ALL THAT OUT! CONSIDERING THE **DETAILS** OF THIS PLAN AND HIS **CONNECTIONS,** I CAN'T **IMAGINE** HE WOULDN'T HAVE SOMETHING **ALREADY** IN PLACE!

SOMETHING THAT WILL **EXPLAIN** WHY NO ONE WILL **EVER** SEE "ROBIN" AGAIN WITHOUT CAUSING EVERYONE, **ESPECIALLY ABBY,** ANY **UNDUE** EMOTIONAL **UPHEAVAL!**

AND IF HE **DOES** HAVE A PLAN, WHICH, GIVEN HIS TRACK RECORD, I'M PRACTICALLY **CERTAIN** HE DOES, THEN I'M **WORRYING** ABOUT **NOTHING!**

I'M SURE IT'S **BEST** FOR **EVERYONE** INVOLVED THAT HE **KEEPS** THAT INFO **CLOSE TO THE VEST** FOR AS **LONG** AS POSSIBLE!

WHICH MEANS I CAN SPEND THE ***REST*** OF THE SUMMER JUST ***ENJOYING*** THIS LIFE THAT'S BEEN ***HANDED*** TO ME!

IT'S ***NOT*** ONE I EVER ***EXPECTED*** OR ***DESERVED,*** BUT WHILE IT'S MINE, I WANT TO ***LIVE*** IT TO ITS ***FULLEST!***

***THAT*** WAY, WHEN THE SUMMER COMES TO AN ***END*** AND I ***WALK AWAY*** FROM "ROBIN", I'LL HAVE ***NO REGRETS!***


WELL... EXCEPT FOR WALKING AWAY FROM THE BEST PEOPLE I'VE EVER MET IN MY LIFE!


As the next couple of weeks pass, Robin experiences some significant changes to her life...

in her job, as she's granted more opportunities...

*physically*, as the hormones continue their work...

and ***personally***, as her ties with the people in her life deepen...


WE STILL GOING CLUBBING ON SATURDAY?
WHAT ELSE WOULD WE POSSIBLY BE DOING ON A SATURDAY? *GIGGLE!*
AWESOME! WE'LL SEE YOU TWO THEN!

I DON'T KNOW IF I'VE **SAID** THIS ENOUGH LATELY, BUT DO **YOU** HAVE **ANY IDEA** HOW **PROUD** I AM OF YOU?

ARE YOU **KIDDING?** THE WAY **YOU** TOOK AN **UNCOMFORTABLE** SITUATION AND IN JUST A COUPLE OF WEEKS **COMPLETELY** TURNED IT AROUND!

PROUD OF **ME?** FOR **WHAT?**

WELL, I **DID** HAVE JUST A **WEE** BIT OF HELP! *GIGGLE!*

I'M **SERIOUS,** ROBIN! IN JUST OVER A MONTH YOU'VE GONE FROM A LANKY, INSECURE **PUNCHING BAG** FOR A HOUSEFUL OF **ALPHA-MALE WANNABES** TO A **GORGEOUS** AND **CONFIDENT** YOUNG WOMAN WHO'S **INDISPENSABLE** TO A **HIGH-PROFILE** LAW FIRM!

THE WAY YOU SO **EASILY** ADAPTED INTO THIS **LIFE** AND THIS **LIFESTYLE** IS, TO ME, **ROCK-SOLID** EVIDENCE THAT **THIS** IS WHO YOU WERE ALWAYS **MEANT** TO BE!

YOU'RE JUST **BIASED** BECAUSE YOU'RE MY **BEST FRIEND!**

HIT ME!

**YES,** I **AM! THANK GOD!** AND **BECAUSE** I'M YOUR BESTIE, I HAVE ONE **VERY IMPORTANT** QUESTION FOR YOU!

**WHEN** ARE YOU GOING TO TELL DOCTOR JOHNSON THAT YOU'RE **DONE** WITH THE **TEMPORARY** BOOBS AND READY FOR THE **"REAL THING"?**

YOU KNOW, THAT'S ***NOT*** A BAD IDEA! IT WOULD PROBABLY ***SAVE*** YOUR UNCLE SOME ***MONEY*** IN THE LONG RUN!

AND ***MAYBE*** I COULD GET SOME THAT'LL ***FINALLY*** PUT ME IN THE ***SAME CATEGORY*** AS ***YOU*** ALL! *GIGGLE!*

AS FAR AS ***UNCLE HANK'S*** CONCERNED, MONEY'S ***NO*** OBJECT! ***TRUST*** ME!

AND AS FOR ***SIZE,*** WELL, THAT'S ***TOTALLY*** UP TO ***YOU,*** GIRL! *GIGGLE!*

OKAY, THIS **MAY** BE GETTING OUT OF HAND! IT MIGHT BE AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY TO TELL NORA THE ***TRUTH!***

YOU KNOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I SHOULD ***COME CLEAN*** ABOUT...

HOLD THAT THOUGHT A SEC...

Buzz!

YOU'RE KIDDING? ***SERIOUSLY?!***

***YEAH!*** I CAN BE THERE IN ***TEN MINUTES!***

WHAT'S GOING ON?

OH MY GOD! THERE'S A MAJOR FILM DOING SOME NIGHT SHOTS IN THE WAREHOUSE DISTRICT AND THEIR CHIEF MAKEUP ARTIST IS MIA!

AND THEY WANT ME TO FILL IN!

YOU'RE THE BEST!

THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? GO!

AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! I'LL CALL AN ÖBER OR GRAB A CAB!


WISH ME LUCK!
YOU DON'T NEED IT, BUT "GOOD LUCK" ANYWAY!


OH WELL! I'VE STILL GOT SEVERAL WEEKS TO TELL HER!


SO THERE'S NO HURRY AT ALL!
TAXI!
DISCOVER THE CITY
9R14
AXI

A couple of days later...

HAVE A SEAT, ROBIN, AND WE'LL ***TALK*** A BIT BEFORE WE GO IN BACK FOR YOUR MONTHLY SHOT!

ANYTHING YOU SAY, DOCTOR JOHNSON!

FIRST OFF, I'D LIKE TO SAY HOW ***WONDERFUL*** YOU LOOK, AND IT'S ***NOT*** JUST THE ***HORMONES*** TAKING EFFECT!

YOU'RE REALLY ***BLOSSOMING*** AS A ***BEAUTIFUL*** YOUNG WOMAN! AND I ABSOLUTELY ***ADORE*** THE NEW HAIRSTYLE!

WELL, SHE OBVIOUSLY IS ***VERY GOOD*** AT HER JOB!

***THANKS!*** I HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S A ***PROFESSIONAL*** MAKEUP ARTIST, AND SHE LIKES TO ***PRACTICE*** ON ME!

I'LL ***TELL*** HER YOU SAID SO!

YOU KNOW, I **BARELY** RECOGNIZE THE PERSON THAT WALKED INTO THIS OFFICE A LITTLE OVER A MONTH AGO!

NOT **ONLY** HAS YOUR BODY **RAPIDLY** ADOPTED TO THE **CHANGES** BROUGHT ON BY THE HORMONES, BUT YOUR WHOLE **ATTITUDE** HAS CHANGED AS WELL!

IN JUST A FEW SHORT WEEKS THAT **TIMID GIRL** HAS GROWN INTO A **CONFIDENT** AND **VIVACIOUS** YOUNG WOMAN! AND I **COULDN'T** BE **PROUDER!**

THEN AS YOUR **DOCTOR,** LET ME GIVE YOU A LITTLE **ADVICE** THAT I THINK MAY **HELP** EVEN MORE!

WELL, LIKE I TOLD MY FRIEND WHO SAID PRETTY MUCH THE **SAME THING** TO ME THAT YOU JUST DID, I HAD A **LOT** OF HELP... **ESPECIALLY** FROM **YOU!**

THOSE ***TEMPORARY*** BREASTS YOU HAVE ARE DUE FOR A ***"REFRESH"*** IN ABOUT A WEEK AND I WANT TO PRESENT YOU WITH THREE ***OPTIONS!***

***FIRST,*** BECAUSE OF YOUR ***NATURAL*** DEVELOPMENT DUE TO THE ***HORMONES,*** REPLENISHING YOUR BREASTS WITH THE ***SAME*** AMOUNT OF SALINE AS BEFORE, OR ***MORE,*** WILL RESULT IN A ***LARGER*** CUP SIZE!

WHICH ***I*** THINK, BOTH PROFESSIONALLY ***AND*** PERSONALLY, WOULD LOOK ***WONDERFUL*** ON YOU!

***OR,*** IF YOU WANT TO ***MAINTAIN*** YOUR CURRENT SIZE, I CAN JUST ADD A ***SMALLER*** AMOUNT OF SALINE THAN I DID ORIGINALLY!

WHAT ***ARE*** THEY?

YOU SAID THERE WERE ***THREE*** OPTIONS! WHAT'S THE ***THIRD?***

**IMPLANTS!** I DON'T **NORMALLY** MAKE THAT KIND OF RECOMMENDATION AFTER ONLY **ONE MONTH,** BUT THE **PROGRESS** I'VE SEEN FROM YOU DEMONSTRATES THAT **YOU'RE** ON THE **FAST TRACK** FOR MORE **ADVANCED** AND **PERMANENT** PROCEDURES!

**MAYBE** EVEN **SRS** IN A COUPLE OF MONTHS, IF THAT'S WHAT **YOU** WANT!

**SRS?** SERIOUSLY?

**HOLY SHIT!** IT DIDN'T **OCCUR** TO ME THAT WHILE I WAS CONVINCING **NORA** THAT I WAS READY TO GO **ALL THE WAY** THAT MY **DOCTOR** WOULD PICK UP ON IT AS WELL... **AND** WANT TO **ACT** ON IT!

WELL, AT **LEAST** I KNOW THAT IF I **WASH OUT** OF LAW SCHOOL I HAVE A FUTURE IN **ACTING** TO FALL BACK ON! *CHUCKLE!*

AND SINCE A "COUPLE OF MONTHS" PUTS US **WELL** INTO **FALL,** I CAN PULL OUT **ALL** THE STOPS AND GO FOR MY **OSCAR!**

**OH MY GOD,** THAT'S **AMAZING** NEWS, DOCTOR JOHNSON! **I** THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO WAIT A **YEAR** OR MORE BEFORE EVEN **HOPING** THAT **SRS** WAS A POSSIBILITY!

IN **MOST** CASES, **YES!** BUT LIKE I SAID, **YOU** ARE AN **EXTRAORDINARY** EXCEPTION!

THEN, **YES!** OF **COURSE** I WANT **SRS!** IT'S **ONLY** BEEN MY **DREAM** EVER SINCE I DISCOVERED MY **TRUE SELF!**

**WONDERFUL!** IN **THAT** CASE I'D LIKE TO SUGGEST WE GET STARTED PLANNING **IMMEDIATELY!**

YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW **COMPLICATED** IT CAN BE LINING UP **HOSPITAL** DATES, **SURGEONS,** AND, OF COURSE, **PAYMENT** CONSIDERATIONS!

I'LL HAVE MY SECRETARY DRAW UP SOME PRELIMINARY PAPERS FOR YOU TO SIGN!

BY THE WAY, WHAT DID YOU ***DECIDE*** ABOUT YOUR ***BREASTS?***

CAN WE ***WAIT*** AND DO THE IMPLANTS WHEN I HAVE THE ***SRS?*** THAT WAY, I CAN GET THE ***FULL EFFECT*** ALL AT ONCE!

***OF COURSE!*** WE'LL JUST ***REPLENISH*** YOUR BREASTS A FEW MORE TIMES UNTIL THEN! WHAT ABOUT THE ***SIZE?***

WELL, YOU'RE THE ***SECOND*** PERSON I TRUST WHO THINKS I CAN GO ***BIGGER,*** SO WHY NOT WORK MY WAY UP ***SLOWLY*** UNTIL THE SURGERY! IS THAT ***OKAY?***

THAT WILL BE ***JUST FINE!*** I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW MINUTES AND WE CAN ***SCHEDULE*** IT!

WELL, ***THIS*** APPOINTMENT TURNED INTO A HELL OF A LOT ***MORE*** THAN I WAS EXPECTING!

***FORTUNATELY*** THOUGH, ANYTHING I PLAN ***TODAY, EXCEPT*** FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF ***BOOB*** ENHANCEMENTS, WON'T MATTER SINCE IT'LL ALL TAKE PLACE ***AFTER*** "ROBIN" IS ***GONE!***

I SHOULD ***PROBABLY*** GO AHEAD AND ASK HANK ***HOW*** THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN SINCE THE ***END*** OF SUMMER IS STARTING TO COME INTO SIGHT AND ***I*** WANT TO BE ***READY*** FOR IT!

AT THE ***SAME*** TIME I CAN LET HIM KNOW ABOUT ***EVERYTHING*** I'VE TOLD THE ***DOCTOR*** HERE TODAY! BEST HE ***KNOWS*** THAT I'M COMMITTING ***HIM*** TO PAY FOR SOME ***MAJOR*** SURGERIES!

BUT ***SURGERIES*** THAT'LL ***NEVER*** HAPPEN!

AND, IF I ***REMEMBER*** RIGHT, ***ABBY*** HAS PLANS WITH ***JILL*** ON SUNDAY! SO THAT'LL BE THE ***PERFECT*** TIME FOR ME TO TOUCH BASE WITH ***HANK*** AND BRING HIM UP TO DATE WITH... WELL, ***EVERYTHING!***

Saturday night...




HEY, HOW 'BOUT WE...
SORRY, DAVE! I'M ONLY HERE FOR THE DANCING! NOTHING ELSE! LATER!


YOU'RE GETTING PRETTY GOOD AT THAT!
I'VE HAD A VERY GOOD TEACHER! *GIGGLE!*

I'M **EXHAUSTED** AND READY TO CALL IT A NIGHT! WHERE **IS** EVERYONE?

THEN **I'M** GOING TO GO PAY THE TAB! BACK IN A MINUTE!

**LEXI** ALREADY **TOOK OFF** WITH THAT GUY SHE WAS DANCING WITH AND IT LOOKS LIKE **DESI** HAS PLANS TO **STICK AROUND** FOR A WHILE LONGER!

WE'LL BE HERE!




EXIT




HEY DESI! DID YOU SEE WHERE NORA WENT?
I THINK SHE AND THAT HUNK SNUCK OFF TO SOME SECLUDED CORNER! *GIGGLE!*
OH, I SEE THEM! WELL, WE'RE TAKING OFF SO WE'LL TALK TO YOU LATER!
OKAY! SEE YA!


WHY DO I HAVE THE FEELING THIS DESIGNATED DRIVER IS GOING HOME ALONE TONIGHT?

I'M SO **SORRY** WE **DISAPPEARED** ON YOU, ROBIN!

OH, I **UNDERSTAND!** *GIGGLE!*

SO, I, UHH... HAVE **ALTERNATE** TRANSPORTATION! DO YOU **MIND** TAKING THE **CAR?**

**NOT** A PROBLEM!


YOU TWO KIDS HAVE FUN! *GIGGLE!*
OH, WE WILL! *GIGGLE!*


JESUS! I DON'T REMEMBER THE CAR BEING THIS FAR AWAY!
I MUST BE MORE EXHAUSTED THAN I THOUGHT!


FUCK EXHAUSTION! I FEEL LIKE I'M ABOUT TO PASS OUT!
BUT I... I ONLY DRANK COKES ALL NIGHT! HOW THE HELL...?


ad Turner
JUST NEED TO... TO GET IN CAR... TURN THE AIR ON! I'LL... I'LL BE JUST... JUST...


Vroom



UGH! WHA... **WHAS** GOIN' ON? WH... WHERE **AM** I?

SAFE AND SOUND, DARLIN'! **I'M** GONNA TAKE **REAL** GOOD CARE OF YOU!

WHO... WHO'R **YOU?** DON... DON'T **KNOW** YOU!

YOU WILL **SOON,** HOT STUFF! **BELIEVE ME!** HEH-HEH!


NO! GE... GET OUT MY CAR!
WATCH IT, YOU CRAZY BITCH! WE'RE DOIN' 50! YOU COULD MAKE US...


Crash!!

The next morning...

WHAT THE FUCK?

DUDE! HEY, *DUDE! WAKE* THE FUCK *UP!*

WHAT THE *HELL* YOU DOIN' SLEEPING ON *OUR* COUCH?

HUH? WAZZAH...

OH, **HELL**, DUDE! **WHO** DID THAT TO YOUR **FACE?**

THEY **SURE** GOT YOU **GOOD!** **HAW-HAW!**

*GROAN!*

IS THIS THE ***SAME*** CHICK THAT ***DISSED*** YOU A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO THAT YOU'VE BEEN ***GOIN' ON*** ABOUT?

***HAW!*** THAT MAKES THIS EVEN ***FUNNIER!*** SHE'S ***DEFINITELY*** GOT ***YOUR*** NUMBER, DUDE!

THIS IS PARTIALLY ***YOUR*** FAULT, MAN!

THE CHICK I ***TRIED*** TO PICK UP LAST NIGHT ***STILL*** HAD A LOT OF ***FIGHT*** LEFT IN HER EVEN ***AFTER*** DOSING HER WITH THOSE ***MAGIC PILLS*** OF YOURS!

YEAH...?

UH, **NO!** SHE WAS JUST **TOO MUCH** TROUBLE, SO I, UHHH... **LEFT** HER IN HER CAR TO SLEEP IT OFF!

BUT SHE **NEVER** GOT A GOOD **LOOK** AT MY FACE, SO **NO WORRIES** ABOUT HER **RECOGNIZING** ME!

SO WHY THE **FUCK** DID I HAVE SO MUCH TROUBLE **THIS** TIME? I **NEVER** HAVE **BEFORE!**

DID YOU AT **LEAST** SEAL THE DEAL WITH HER WHEN SHE **CALMED DOWN?**

SHE **PROBABLY** WASN'T **DRUNK** ENOUGH! THESE BABIES ARE **DESIGNED** TO WORK **WITH** THE **ALCOHOL** TO NOT ONLY FURTHER **LOWER** HER **INHIBITIONS,** BUT ALSO MAKE HER MORE **SUSCEPTIBLE** TO SUGGESTION!

THEN IT **BREAKS DOWN** AND BECOMES **UNDETECTABLE** IN A BLOOD TEST! **THAT'S** THEIR **MAGIC** AND THEY'VE **NEVER** FAILED US BEFORE! HEH-HEH

BUT I SUGGEST YOU KEEP THAT UGLY **MUG** OF YOURS **OUT** OF THE SPOTLIGHT UNTIL IT HEALS UP!

THOSE SCRATCH MARKS OF HERS **COULD** FORCE A FEW **UNWANTED QUESTIONS!**


NO WORRIES THERE! I'M HITTIN' THE ROAD FOR A FEW WEEKS UNTIL CLASSES START BACK UP!
THAT'S WHY I STOPPED BY! I WANTED TO GET A FEW MORE OF THOSE PILLS FOR THE ROAD!
SERIOUSLY, DUDE? YOU WANT TO TAKE YOUR EPIC FAILURES ON THE ROAD?

HEY, FUCK YOU! THIS WAS ONLY THE FIRST TIME I WAS DENIED!

WHATEVER! WAIT HERE AND I'LL GET 'EM FOR YOU!


HELL YEAH! I WANNA MAKE SURE I'M PREPARED FOR ANY OPPORTUNITIES THAT MIGHT ARISE DURING MY TRAVELS! HEH-HEH!

Later that morning...

HERE'S TO ANOTHER **WELL-FOUGHT** CASE AND **SATISFIED** CLIENT!

AND **OUR** HEALTHY **PERCENTAGE** OF THE SETTLEMENT!

Buzz

THIS IS ABBY MONROE!

WHY **YES,** I **DO** HAVE AN EMPLOYEE BY THAT NAME! **WHAT'S** THIS **ABOUT?**

IF THAT'S A **CLIENT** CALLING US ON A **SUNDAY,** TELL HIM TO **FUCK OFF!**

AS OF **FRIDAY,** WE CAN **AFFORD** IT!

OH MY GOD! IS SHE OKAY?!

WHAT HOSPITAL?!

I'M ON MY WAY!

HOLY SHIT, ABBY! WHAT'S WRONG?

**ROBIN'S** BEEN IN A **CAR ACCIDENT!** SHE'S IN THE **ER** AT COUNTY GENERAL!


LET ME DRIVE AND I'LL GET US THERE IN FIVE MINUTES!
YOU CALL HANK AND NORA AND LET THEM KNOW!

A short time later in the County General ER...

I'M ABIGAIL MONROE! **WHERE** IS **ROBIN SULLIVAN?**

WHO?

THE **CAR CRASH VICTIM!**

OH, **SHE'S** IN THE RECOVERY ROOM! BUT THE DOCTOR'S WITH HER AND WILL BE OUT TO SPEAK WITH YOU AS **SOON** AS HE'S DONE!

SORRY I **LOST** YOU THERE FOR A MINUTE! I GOT IN A **PISSING MATCH** WITH AN **EMT** WHO DIDN'T LIKE ME PARKING BEHIND HIS **PRECIOUS** TRUCK!

**WHERE IS SHE?**

IN **THERE!** BUT THE DOCTOR **HASN'T** BEEN OUT HERE YET TO **TELL** ME ANYTHING!

EXIT

Recovery

WELL, I CAN FIX THAT REAL QUICK!

MISS! YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE!

IS THERE A **PROBLEM** OUT HERE?

THERE **WILL** BE IF **WE** DON'T GET TO SEE **ROBIN!**

*JILL! CALM DOWN!*

I'M **ABBY MONROE** AND THIS IS **JILL WEATHERS!** ROBIN **WORKS** FOR US! THE **POLICE** CALLED AND SAID SHE'D BEEN IN A **CAR ACCIDENT!**

WE'RE THE **CLOSEST** THING SHE HAS TO A **FAMILY,** SO **PLEASE** TELL US HOW SHE IS!

I'M **DOCTOR MACY!** I DON'T KNOW THE **DETAILS** OF THE CRASH, YOU'LL **HAVE** TO TALK TO THE **POLICE** ABOUT THAT!

BUT HER CONDITION IS **STABLE!** SHE GOT PRETTY **BANGED UP** IN THE WRECK! A FEW **CRACKED RIBS** AND SOME **FACIAL CONTUSIONS!**

PROBABLY THE MOST **SEVERE** WAS A **GROIN INJURY** WHICH **INITIALLY** CAUGHT US A LITTLE **OFF GUARD!**

Recove

WELL, WHATEVER ***IMPACTED*** HER DOWN THERE, IT ***COULD'VE*** BEEN THE STICK SHIFT, CAUSED ***BOTH*** HER ***TESTICLES*** TO ***RUPTURE!*** SO WE HAD TO PERFORM AN EMERGENCY ***ORCHIECTOMY!***

***YES,*** SHE'S CURRENTLY ***TRANSITIONING!*** WE KNOW ***ALL*** ABOUT THAT!

IT'S SOMETHING SHE WOULD HAVE ***HAD*** TO DO ***ANYWAY*** IF SHE IS ***INDEED*** TRANSITIONING, BUT THE ACCIDENT ***FORCED*** THE ISSUE!

IS SHE ***AWAKE?*** WHEN CAN WE ***SEE*** HER?

SHE'S STILL ***UNCONSCIOUS,*** BUT ***BEFORE*** I LET YOU IN, THERE'S SOMETHING ***ELSE*** YOU SHOULD KNOW!

***WHAT IS IT?***

WE'RE **REQUIRED** BY LAW TO DO A **BLOOD TEST** FOR DRUGS OR ALCOHOL AFTER ACCIDENTS LIKE THIS!

**ROBIN** DOESN'T **DO** DRUGS! SHE **RARELY** EVEN **DRINKS!**

WHICH HER TESTS **VERIFIED!** BUT THERE WERE TRACES OF **GHB** IN HER BLOODSTREAM!

ARE YOU TELLING ME **SOMEONE** TRIED TO **DATE-RAPE** ROBIN?

IT WOULD **SEEM** THAT WAY!

**EXCUSE** ME! ARE YOU **ABIGAIL MONROE?**

I AM! AND WHO ARE YOU?

I'M OFFICER DARBY! I CALLED YOU EARLIER ABOUT THE VICTIM! COULD I ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS?

WELL, I'D REALLY LIKE TO SEE ROBIN FIRST!

GO AHEAD AND GET THIS OVER WITH FIRST, ABBY! I'LL GO KEEP ROBIN COMPANY!

DO YOU **KNOW** WHAT HAPPENED, OFFICER DARBY?

FROM WHAT WE CAN TELL, SHE WAS A **PASSENGER** IN A CAR THAT STRUCK THE SIDE OF A BUILDING AT **HIGH SPEED** LATE LAST NIGHT!

**LATE LAST NIGHT?** THEN **WHY** ARE WE JUST **NOW** HEARING ABOUT IT?

BECAUSE WE **DIDN'T** HAVE ANY **ID** ON HER UNTIL **THIS MORNING!** ALL WE FOUND IN A BURNED UP PURSE WAS THE **REMAINS** OF AN **EMPLOYEE ID** FOR **YOUR** FIRM! **THAT'S** WHEN WE CALLED **YOU!**

IF **SHE** WAS THE PASSENGER, THEN **WHO** WAS THE DRIVER? **OH GOD,** IT WASN'T **NORA,** WAS IT?

I DON'T **KNOW** WHO **NORA** IS, BUT THE DRIVER WAS A YOUNG **MAN** SEEN **RUNNING** FROM THE WRECK!

**NO** EYE-WITNESSES COULD **ID** HIM DIRECTLY, BUT WE **DID** GET A HIT FROM THE CAR'S **VIN!**

**WHO'S** CAR **WAS** IT?

DO **YOU** KNOW A **ROBERT STILLMAN?**

**I'VE** NEVER **HEARD** OF HIM! WAS **HE** THE PERSON WHO TRIED TO **DRUG** AND **RAPE** ROBIN?

SO THE DOCTOR **TOLD** YOU ABOUT THE **GHB!** WELL, YES... THIS **DOES** MAKE **HIM** OUR **PRIME SUSPECT!**

**ESPECIALLY** SINCE A **CREDIT CARD TRACE** ON HIM SHOWS ACTIVITY LAST NIGHT AT THE **SAME CLUB** YOUR EMPLOYEE WAS AT!

**HOW** DO YOU **KNOW** WHERE SHE **WAS?**

THE **STAMP** ON THE BACK OF HER HAND **MATCHES** WHAT THE CLUB USES!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO *FIND* THIS *CREEP?*

*EVERYTHING* WE CAN! WE DON'T HAVE A *GOOD* DESCRIPTION YET, BUT AS SOON AS WE FIND OUT *MORE* ABOUT MR. STILLMAN, YOU CAN *REST ASSURED* WE'LL *TRACK HIM DOWN!*

WELL, *WHATEVER* MY FIRM AND I CAN DO TO HELP, *PLEASE* DON'T *HESITATE* TO ASK, OFFICER DARBY!

NOW IF YOU'LL *EXCUSE* ME, I *NEED* TO SEE *ROBIN!*

OF COURSE, AND *THANK YOU,* MA'AM! WE'LL BE IN TOUCH!

PLEASE REST ASSURED, IT **LOOKS** A LOT WORSE THAN IT **IS!**

LIKE I SAID EARLIER, **EXCEPT** FOR THE REMOVED TESTICLES, **EVERYTHING** WILL HEAL!

IT MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME, BUT **SHE WILL RECOVER!**

**OH MY GOD! YOU POOR THING!**

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT A ***GENERAL*** PHYSICIAN, BUT HER ***TRANSITION*** SPECIALIST IS DOCTOR ***CAROLYN JOHNSON*** IF ***THAT'S*** ANY HELP!

***THANK YOU,*** DOCTOR... FOR ***EVERYTHING*** YOU'VE DONE!

IN REGARD TO HER RECOVERY AND TREATMENT, DOES SHE HAVE A ***PERSONAL*** PHYSICIAN?

IT ***IS!*** THE ***ORCHIECTOMY*** WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE A ***MAJOR*** IMPACT ON WHATEVER HER ***TRANSITION SCHEDULE*** WAS!

I'LL CONTACT DOCTOR JOHNSON ***IMMEDIATELY*** SO YOU TWO CAN HAVE SOME TIME ALONE WITH ROBIN!

BY THE WAY, WE **DID** FIND SOME **SKIN** UNDER HER FINGERNAILS!

I DON'T KNOW IF IT WILL **HELP** THE POLICE OR **NOT**, BUT IT **DOES** SHOW SHE PUT UP A **GOOD FIGHT** BEFORE THE CRASH!

**THAT'S** MY GIRL!

I CALLED *HANK* BUT HE *WASN'T* ANSWERING SO I LEFT A MESSAGE!

GET HER INTO A *PRIVATE* ROOM UPSTAIRS AND CALL IN AS MANY *SPECIALISTS* AS IT TAKES!

OH, *HIS* LIFE IS *OVER!* I CAN *PROMISE* YOU THAT!

ARE *HANK* AND *NORA* ON THE WAY?

*WHAT* DO YOU WANT TO DO?

AND WHAT ABOUT THE *SLIMEMOLD* THAT *DID* THIS TO HER?

A few hours later...

Knock
Knock

I'M COMING! I'M COMING!

THE NAME'S ***SKIP ANDERSON!*** I'M AN ***INVESTIGATOR!*** I UNDERSTAND ***ROBERT STILLMAN*** USED TO LIVE HERE!

THEN LET'S ***TALK*** ABOUT THAT!

YEAH?

HE ***USED*** TO, BUT ***NOT*** ANYMORE!

HEY! I DIDN'T SAY YOU COULD COME IN!

WE ALREADY TOLD THE COPS EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT STILLMAN!

PROBABLY BECAUSE I DIDN'T ASK!

WELL I'M NOT THE COPS, SO THE SOONER YOU TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU TOLD THEM, THE SOONER I'LL BE GONE!

FINE! LIKE I TOLD THE COPS, WE HAVEN'T SEEN OR HEARD FROM STILLMAN SINCE HE UP AND MOVED OUT OVER A MONTH AGO! SO WHY IS EVERYONE LOOKING FOR HIM?

NOT A CLUE! WE ALL WOKE UP ONE MORNING AND HE WAS GONE! JUST LEFT A NOTE SAYING HE WAS MOVING OUT!

GOOD RIDDANCE, IF YOU ASK ME!

I'M NOT AT LIBERTY TO SAY! WHY DID HE MOVE OUT?

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

HE WAS A ***CREEPY*** LITTLE DUDE! KEPT TO ***HIMSELF,*** ALWAYS ***HUDDLED*** OVER HIS LAPTOP AND HIS PHONE, ***NEVER*** LETTING ***US*** SEE WHAT HE WAS LOOKING AT!

HE WAS JUST ***WEIRD!***

HE DIDN'T HAVE ***ANY*** FRIENDS, ***PERIOD! WE*** WERE JUST HOUSE-MATES... ***NOTHING ELSE!***

DOES HE HAVE ANY ***OTHER*** FRIENDS YOU KNOW ABOUT?

MIAMI BEACH
Florida

SEE? THAT WASN'T TOO PAINFUL! A FEW EASY QUESTIONS AND NOW I'M OUT OF YOUR HAIR!

BUT I'M SURE YOU'LL CONTACT ME THE SECOND YOU THINK OF SOMETHING NEW!

OH, YEAH! YOU'LL BE THE FIRST ONE WE CALL!


IN YOUR FUCKIN' DREAMS!
Slam!

SOME **PI** ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT **STILLMAN!**

THE **EXACT** SAME THING I TOLD THE **POLICE!**

**WHO** THE HELL WAS **THAT?**

WHAT'D YOU **TELL** HIM?

WHICH, **NOW** THAT I **THINK** ABOUT IT, **MAY** HAVE GIVEN THEM THE IMPRESSION THAT **STILLMAN** WAS SOME KIND OF **SEX FIEND!**

SURE **HOPE** I DIDN'T **INADVERTENTLY** CAUSE THEM TO **DOUBLE DOWN** ON THEIR EFFORTS TO **FIND** THE UNGRATEFUL LITTLE SHIT! HEH-HEH!

YEAH! THAT'D **SURE** BE **TERRIBLE!**

**ESPECIALLY** AFTER ALL THE **GOOD TIMES** WE HAD TOGETHER! HEH-HEH!

Back at the hospital...


HELLO! I'M DOCTOR JOHNSON!

OH, ***YOU'RE*** ROBIN'S TRANSITION SPECIALIST! ***I'M*** ABBY MONROE! ROBIN WORKS FOR ME!

IT'S ***ABBY***, PLEASE! HAVE THE ***OTHER*** DOCTORS TALKED TO YOU YET, DOCTOR JOHNSON?

YES, I KNOW! ROBIN SPEAKS VERY ***HIGHLY*** OF YOU DURING OUR SESSIONS, MS. MONROE!

***DOCTOR MACY*** FILLED ME IN ON ***EVERYTHING*** AND I CHECKED HER CHARTS ***RIGHT*** BEFORE COMING IN!

AND ***PLEASE*** CALL ME ***CAROLYN!***

I'M **CONCERNED** THAT SHE HASN'T **FULLY** WAKEN UP YET! SHE'S **STIRRED** A FEW TIMES AND MUMBLED, BUT **NOTHING ELSE!**

**ABOUT** THAT! DOCTOR MACY SAID IT **SHOULDN'T** IMPACT HER **TRANSITION** PLANS, BUT **I** WANTED TO HEAR IT FROM **YOU!**

I WOULDN'T BE **TOO** CONCERNED! THERE WAS **NO** INDICATION OF **HEAD TRAUMA** OR **CONCUSSION,** SO SHE'S MOSTLY JUST **SLEEPING OFF** THE ANESTHESIA FROM THE **ORCHIECTOMY!**

SINCE THERE WEREN'T ANY **OTHER** INJURIES TO HER PELVIC REGION, THE REMOVAL OF HER TESTICLES **ACTUALLY** PUTS HER **WAY AHEAD** OF SCHEDULE!

IN FACT, IF WE'D **HAD** THE FINAL APPROVAL, THEY PROBABLY WOULD'VE **ALREADY** DONE THE **VAGINOPLASTY** IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE **ORCHIECTOMY!**

WELL, I'M ***SURE*** SHE'LL BE ***THRILLED*** TO HEAR THAT SHE'S THAT CLOSE! ***ESPECIALLY*** CONSIDERING ***EVERYTHING*** SHE'S BEEN THROUGH!

HOW ***SOON*** AFTER SHE WAKES UP WILL IT TAKE TO GET THE BALL ROLLING AGAIN?

WELL, LIKE I SAID, SHE'S ***ALREADY*** SIGNED ***ALL*** OF THE PRELIMINARY PAPERWORK! ALL WE'D NEED IS A GO-AHEAD FROM ***HER*** AS SOON AS SHE WAKES UP, OR FROM ***YOU*** AS HER DESIGNATED ***HEALTH AGENT!***

WAIT! ***I'M*** HER ***HEALTH AGENT?***

NO, I DIDN'T! I... I HAD ***NO IDEA*** SHE ***TRUSTED*** ME SO MUCH!

YOU DIDN'T KNOW?

OH, SHE DEFINITELY ***DID!*** WHICH MEANS THAT UNTIL SHE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS ***YOU*** CAN MAKE MEDICAL DECISIONS ***FOR*** HER!

IN *THAT* CASE, WOULD YOU *PLEASE* SEE HOW *SOON* YOU CAN GET A SURGICAL TEAM TOGETHER?

AFTER WHAT *THIS* GIRL HAS BEEN THROUGH, SHE *DESERVES* TO HAVE THE LIFE SHE'S *DREAMED* ABOUT!

AND AS *SOON* AS *POSSIBLE!*

I'LL GET RIGHT ON IT!

A short time later...

WE'RE HERE! ***WHAT HAPPENED?!***

I LEFT YOU A MESSAGE ***HOURS*** AGO! WHERE THE ***DEVIL*** HAVE YOU BEEN?!

PLAYING ***GOLF*** WITH SID AND MARTY! I DIDN'T ***KNOW*** MY PHONE WAS ***DEAD*** UNTIL WE FINISHED UP ABOUT A ***HALF HOUR*** AGO!

***OH MY GOD!*** HOW ***IS*** SHE?


WHAT CAR CRASH? SHE WAS FINE WHEN SHE LEFT THE CLUB LAST NIGHT!
WHERE'S THE GUY? DO THE POLICE HAVE HIM, OR IS HE A PATIENT HERE TOO?
WHICHEVER THE CASE, I'LL KILL HIM!
SHE'S FINE! JUST A LITTLE BANGED UP FROM THE CAR CRASH!
SOME GUY DRUGGED HER AND THEN SHOVED HER INTO HIS CAR! WHEN SHE WOKE AND FOUGHT BACK, THEY CRASHED!
THEY HAVEN'T FOUND HIM YET! HE RAN OFF AND LEFT HER IN THE WRECKED CAR!

GOD! THIS IS ALL MY FAULT! I SHOULD'VE BEEN WATCHING THE DRINKS! INSTEAD, I WAS TOO DAMN BUSY TRYING TO...

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, DEAR! ALL THE BLAME LANDS SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE SORRY EXCUSE FOR A MAN THAT DID THIS!

FORTUNATELY, THE POLICE DISCOVERED WHO OWNED THE CAR! AND THAT VERY PERSON USED HIS CREDIT CARD AT THE SAME CLUB YOU ALL WERE AT!

SO THEY HAVE A SUSPECT?

VERY MUCH SO!

WHAT... IS... HIS... NAME?!

ROBERT STILLMAN!

*GASP!* DID... DID YOU SAY **STILLMAN?**

YES! **WHY?** DO YOU **KNOW** HIM?

*GROAN!* **OOHH!** MY HEAD HURTS!

ROBIN! YOU'RE AWAKE!

YOU'RE IN THE **HOSPITAL,** DEAR! YOU WERE IN A CAR WRECK, BUT **YOU'RE OKAY!** JUST A LITTLE **BANGED UP** AND BRUISED!

**LAST NIGHT!** DO YOU REMEMBER **ANYTHING** ABOUT IT?

UHHH, YEAH! WH... WHAT'S GOING **ON?** WHERE **AM** I?

**CAR WRECK? WHEN?**

JUST GETTING **DIZZY** ON THE WAY TO THE CAR! THEN... **NOTHING,** UNTIL NOW!

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER **THAT?**

WELL, ALL ***EVIDENCE*** POINTS TO SOMEONE ***SPIKING*** YOUR DRINK AT THE CLUB AND THEN ***FORCING*** YOU INTO THEIR CAR WHEN YOU STARTED PASSING OUT!

I'M AFRAID SO! BUT HE ***NEVER*** GOT THE CHANCE TO BECAUSE IT SEEMS ***YOU*** WERE ABLE TO ***FIGHT HIM OFF!***

THAT'S WHAT ***PROBABLY*** CAUSED THE ***CRASH!***

I'M AFRAID HE GOT AWAY... ***FOR NOW!*** BUT THE POLICE HAVE SOME VERY ***STRONG LEADS!***

SOMEONE TRIED TO ***DATE-RAPE*** ME? ***SERIOUSLY?***

***JESUS!*** DID THEY ***CATCH*** THE GUY?

I WANT TO GO TELL THE DOCTOR SHE'S **AWAKE** AND THEN CALL **JILL!**

PLEASE **STAY** WITH HER!

OH, **WE'RE** NOT GOING **ANYWHERE!**

LOOK, ROBIN... BEFORE THE DOCTOR AND ***ESPECIALLY*** ABBY COME BACK IN HERE, WE NEED TO ***FIGURE*** A FEW THINGS ***OUT!***

FIRST OFF, THE CAR THAT ***CRASHED*** LAST NIGHT WAS ***YOUR CAR!***

LIKE ***WHAT?***

AW, ***SHIT!*** MY ***INSURANCE*** IS GOING TO GO THROUGH THE ***ROOF,*** AND...

THE INSURANCE IS THE ***LEAST*** OF OUR WORRIES RIGHT NOW!

ALSO, DID YOU USE YOUR ***OLD*** CREDIT CARD LAST NIGHT?

IT'S... POSSIBLE! IT WAS ***DARK,*** I WAS IN A ***HURRY*** AND IT LOOKS ***JUST LIKE*** MY ***NEW*** CARD!

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

*SIGH!* THE **"STRONG LEAD"** THAT ABBY REFERRED TO IS **YOU!**

THE **POLICE** ARE LOOKING FOR **ROBERT STILLMAN** AS THE **PRIME SUSPECT** IN YOUR ATTEMPTED RAPE!

NOT TO MENTION **KIDNAPPING, HIT AND RUN,** AND A HOST OF **OTHER** FELONIES!

THEY'RE LOOKING FOR **ME?** FOR THE ATTEMPTED RAPE OF... **ME?**

YOU'RE **NOT** MAKING THIS UP, **ARE YOU!**

I WISH I **WAS,** ROBIN!

BUT FROM WHAT **NORA'S** TOLD ME, THE SITUATION'S NOT **NEARLY** AS DIRE AS IT **COULD'VE** BEEN!

**HOW?** WH... **WHAT** DID YOU TELL HIM, NORA?

I **TOLD** UNCLE HANK HOW YOU'VE DECIDED TO **KEEP BEING** ROBIN EVEN **AFTER** THE SUMMER ENDED!

I **DID!** I'M **SORRY** IF I BROKE YOUR CONFIDENCE, ROBIN! I **REALLY AM!**

BE ANGRY AT HER **LATER** WHEN WE HAVE THE TIME!

YOU **DIDN'T!**

**OH, SHIT!** SHIT, SHIT, SHIT, SHIT, **SHIT!**

RIGHT NOW, THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO ***STAY*** BEING ROBIN PRESENTS US WITH AN ***OPPORTUNITY*** AND A ***DECISION*** TO MAKE!

SINCE YOU DON'T PLAN ON BEING ROBERT AGAIN, THE ***POLICE*** WILL HAVE A VERY ***HARD*** TIME ***FINDING*** HIM!

AND ***I*** CAN MAKE ***SURE*** THAT ANY TRAIL ***"HE"*** MIGHT LEAVE ***NEVER*** LEADS BACK TO ***YOU!***

WHAT ***OPPORTUNITY?***

IN OTHER WORDS, **THANKS** TO MY SURPRISINGLY **ADEPT** ACTING ABILITIES, THE LIFE I WAS **PLANNING** ON GOING **BACK** TO IS **OVER! GREAT!**

SO WHAT'S THE **DECISION** WE HAVE TO MAKE?


WHAT DO WE TELL ABBY?
I'VE SEEN THAT LOOK ON HER FACE BEFORE! SHE IS ON A MISSION TO BRING YOUR ASSAILANT IN FOR JUSTICE!
SO, DO WE KEEP HER IN THE DARK SO SHE KEEPS THINKING "ROBERT STILLMAN" IS THE CULPRIT?
OR, DO WE TELL HER THE TRUTH?
SINCE THIS IS YOUR LIFE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE, THE DECISION IS YOURS, ROBIN!

WE *CAN'T* TELL HER THE *TRUTH!* IF WE DID, ABBY WOULD FEEL *COMPELLED* TO TELL THE *POLICE* AND EVENTUALLY IT WOULD GET OUT TO THE *PUBLIC!*

I DON'T *CARE* ABOUT HOW THAT WOULD MAKE *ME* LOOK, BUT IT WOULD MOST *CERTAINLY* TARNISH *ABBY'S* REPUTATION!

EVEN THOUGH WE DID NOTHING *ILLEGAL*, THE *PRESS* WOULD *SENSATIONALIZE* THE WHOLE THING, *RUINING* HER CHANCES IN THE ELECTION!

I *CAN'T* LET *THAT* HAPPEN TO HER!

AS MUCH AS I ***DISLIKE*** KEEPING THINGS FROM HER, I ***HAVE*** TO AGREE!

SO AS ***SOON*** AS I LEAVE HERE TODAY I'LL START DROPPING SOME ***BREADCRUMBS*** THAT WILL LEAD THE POLICE INTO THINKING ***"ROBERT"*** HAS LEFT TOWN... ***FOR GOOD!***

WITH HIM ***OUT*** OF THE PICTURE, ABBY JUST ***MIGHT*** BE ABLE TO SPEND ***LESS*** TIME FIXATING ON ***HIM*** AND ***MORE*** TIME PLANNING FOR THE ***ELECTION!***

ME TOO!


YES, SHE WOKE UP A FEW MINUTES AGO!
I'M HANK MONROE AND THIS IS MY NIECE, NORA! I BELIEVE YOU'VE ALREADY MET MY WIFE, ABBY!
I UNDERSTAND I HAVE A CONSCIOUS PATIENT IN HERE!
I HAVE! SHE'S OUT IN THE HALL RIGHT NOW ON THE PHONE!

HI, ROBIN! I'M **DOCTOR MACY!** HOW DO YOU **FEEL?**

ANY PLACE IN PARTICULAR?

**SORE!**

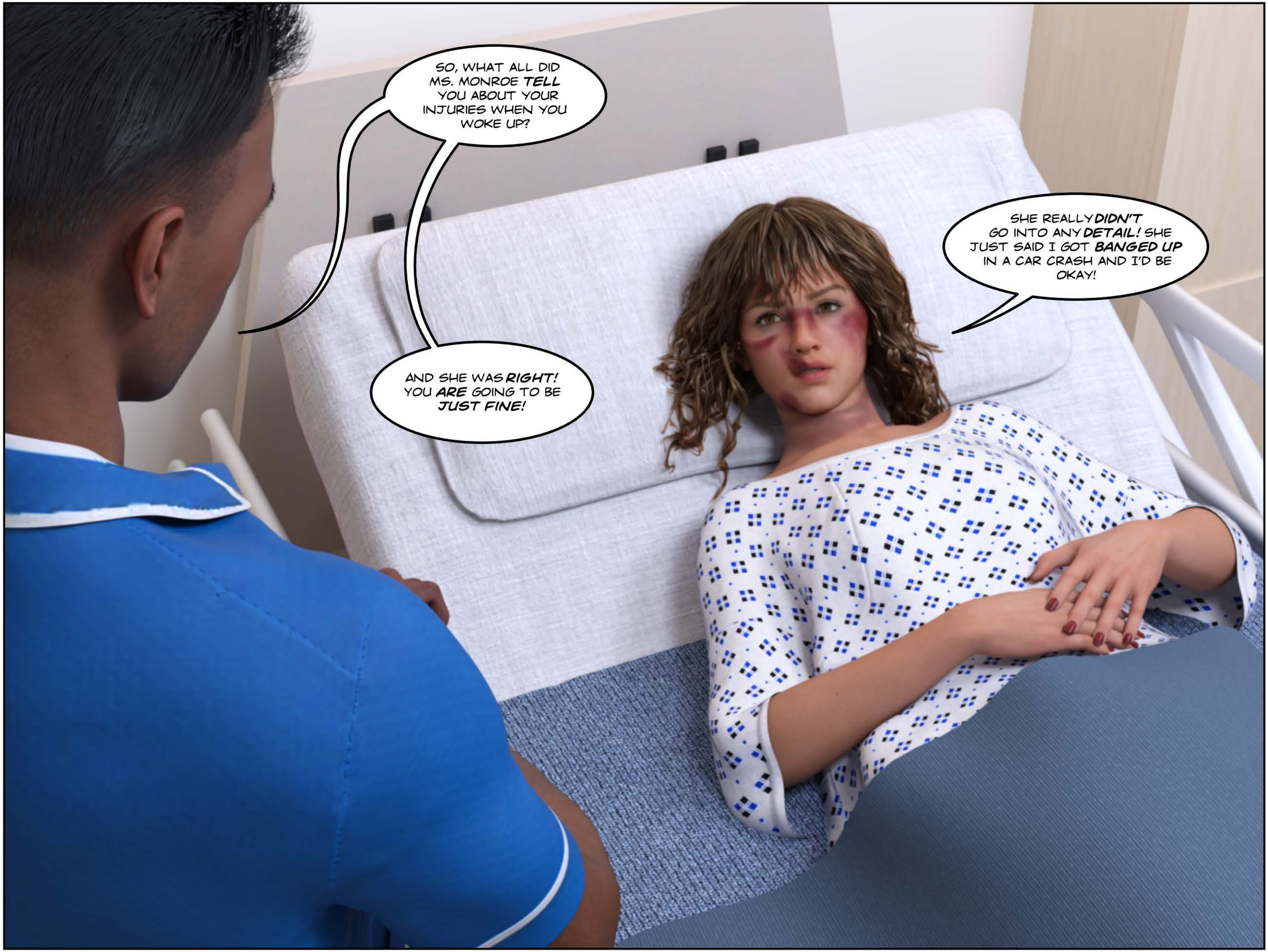
*SIGH!* IT'D PROBABLY BE **EASIER** TO SAY WHERE I **DON'T** HURT!

BUT I **MOSTLY** FEEL IT IN MY FACE, MY CHEST AND, FOR **SOME** REASON, MY **GROIN!**

WELL... **THAT'S** TO BE EXPECTED!

COULD YOU TWO GIVE ME THE ROOM FOR A FEW MINUTES!

OF *COURSE!* WE'LL BE RIGHT OUTSIDE, ROBIN!


SO, WHAT ALL DID MS. MONROE TELL YOU ABOUT YOUR INJURIES WHEN YOU WOKE UP?
AND SHE WAS RIGHT! YOU ARE GOING TO BE JUST FINE!
SHE REALLY DIDN'T GO INTO ANY DETAIL! SHE JUST SAID I GOT BANGED UP IN A CAR CRASH AND I'D BE OKAY!


BUT THERE IS ONE INJURY I ASKED HER TO LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT!
AN INJURY THAT, IRONICALLY, YOU MAY BE ULTIMATELY HAPPY ABOUT!

A short time later, after Doctor Macy has left...

WELL... SHIT!

I WAS ***REALLY*** HOPING I COULD ***EASE*** INTO THE IDEA THAT I WAS GOING TO ***HAVE*** TO BE ROBIN FOR THE ***REST*** OF MY ***LIFE,*** BUT IT LOOKS LIKE ***THAT*** OPTION HAS BEEN TAKEN ***AWAY*** FROM ME!

ALL BECAUSE SOME SLEAZY ***PIECE OF SHIT*** PICKED ***ME,*** OF ALL PEOPLE, TO TRY AND ***DATE-RAPE!***

***JESUS!*** I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT HE ***MIGHT'VE*** DONE IF HE'D GOTTEN ***FAR*** ENOUGH TO REALIZE I ***WASN'T*** THE "GIRL" HE ***THOUGHT*** I WAS!

THERE'S A STRONG CHANCE I ***COULD'VE*** ENDED UP IN A MUCH ***COLDER*** ROOM THAN THIS ONE!

BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME TO **DWELL** ON THAT RIGHT NOW, BECAUSE **ABBY** IS GOING TO COME THROUGH THOSE DOORS ANY MINUTE **GUSHING** ABOUT MY IMPENDING **SRS!**

AND AS FAR AS **SHE** AND EVERYONE **ELSE** IS CONCERNED, THIS IS SOMETHING **I** WANT **MORE** THAN **ANYTHING ELSE!**

SO I'VE GOT TO **SUCK IT UP** AND FIND **SOME** WAY TO CONVINCE **MYSELF** THAT **THIS** IS THE **BEST** THING FOR **ME!**

HI, SWEETIE! HOW ARE YOU DOING?

I'M FINE, ABBY! AND LIKE THE DOCTOR SAID, I'M GOING TO GET EVEN BETTER!

DOCTOR MACY SAID HE **TOLD** YOU ABOUT THE **ORCHIECTOMY** AND WHAT **DOCTOR JOHNSON** AND I TALKED ABOUT!

HOW DO **YOU** FEEL ABOUT THAT?

HOW DO **I** FEEL?

OH, ABBY! I ***COULDN'T*** BE ***HAPPIER!*** I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT ***MONTHS*** TO BECOME A ***REAL*** WOMAN, BUT ***YOU'RE*** GOING TO HELP ME MAKE IT HAPPEN IN JUST ***DAYS!***

I... I DON'T KNOW ***HOW*** TO ***THANK*** YOU!

I AM SO **RELIEVED** TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT! I WAS **AFRAID** YOU MIGHT **RESENT** ME FOR **OVERSTEPPING** MY BOUNDARIES!

AND **THAT'S** SOMETHING I JUST **COULDN'T HANDLE!** YOU JUST MEAN **TOO MUCH** TO ME!

I... I **DO?**

**OF COURSE!** MY **GOD,** ROBIN, **YOU** AND **NORA** ARE ESSENTIALLY THE **DAUGHTERS** HANK AND I COULD **NEVER** HAVE!




*SNIFF!*
WHAT'S WRONG, DEAR?
NOTHING! NOTHING AT ALL!
IT'S JUST THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN EVERYTHING ABOUT MY LIFE FINALLY MAKES SENSE!


I'M SO GLAD TO HEAR THAT, ROBIN DEAR!
NOW... WHEN WOULD YOU LIKE TO SCHEDULE THE SURGERY?

*SNIFF!* THE SOONER, THE BETTER!

A few days later, after Robin's SRS...

EVEN THOUGH WE'RE STILL A ***MONTH*** AWAY FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER, I ***KNOW*** HOW ***CONCERNED*** YOU ARE ABOUT ***MISSING*** THE FIRST FEW WEEKS OF CLASSES! BUT I ***THINK*** I HAVE A ***SOLUTION!***

YOU ***DO?*** WHAT ***IS*** IT?

THERE'S A VERY **GOOD** CHANCE I CAN TALK THE **DEAN** INTO LETTING YOU ATTEND YOUR CLASSES **REMOTELY,** AT **LEAST** FOR THE **FIRST** FEW WEEKS!

HE'S A **FRIEND** OF MINE, AND ALTHOUGH I DON'T LIKE **CURRYING FAVORS,** FOR **YOU** I'LL MAKE AN **EXCEPTION!**

**THAT** WOULD BE **AMAZING,** ABBY! DO YOU **REALLY** THINK HE'LL GO ALONG WITH THAT IDEA?

I'M PRETTY **CONFIDENT** HE **WILL!**

AND IF **THAT** DOESN'T WORK, I HAVE A **HISTORY** WITH A COUPLE OF THE **TRUSTEES** AND KNOW WHERE A FEW **SKELETONS** ARE BURIED!

JUST IN CASE, OF COURSE!


YOU TWO ARE THE BEST, YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
WHY, YES... I BELIEVE WE DO!
ESTABLISHED LONG AGO BY UNANIMOUS VOTE!

I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHAT THE DEAN'S ***DECISION*** IS AS ***SOON*** AS I TALK WITH HIM!

DO YOU ***NEED*** ANYTHING BEFORE WE LEAVE? ARE YOU ***COMFORTABLE?***

I'M ***FINE!*** I HAD TWO NURSES, THE ATTENDING PHYSICIAN ***AND*** MY SURGEON STOP BY ***RIGHT BEFORE*** YOU GOT HERE!

AND THEY ***ALL*** CONCUR THAT EVERYTHING, ***INCLUDING*** MY NEW... PLUMBING, IS HEALING ***JUST*** LIKE IT ***SHOULD!***

WE'LL STOP BY AGAIN LATER THIS AFTERNOON!

***TRY*** NOT TO GO ***TOO*** CRAZY WITH BOREDOM, DEAR!

I'LL DO MY BEST! ***BYE!***

I KNOW I ***SHOULD*** BE TOTALLY ***STOKED*** ABOUT BEING ABLE TO ***RESUME*** MY SECOND YEAR ON TIME, BUT IT ***ALSO*** BRINGS UP SOMETHING THAT UNTIL RECENTLY I'D NEVER ***ANTICIPATED!!***

AND ***THAT'S*** ATTENDING LAW SCHOOL AS ***ROBIN SULLIVAN*** INSTEAD OF AS ***ROBERT STILLMAN!***

ALTHOUGH ***HANK*** SAID ALL MY SCHOOL RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS ***SHOULD*** BE IN PLACE, THERE'S ***STILL*** THE RISK THAT ***SOMEONE*** MIGHT NOTICE ***NEVER*** SEEING ME ON ***CAMPUS*** OR IN ***CLASS*** BEFORE!

I CAN ONLY ***HOPE*** THAT THE OVERWHELMING ***SIZE*** OF ALL MY FIRST YEAR CLASSES WILL ***KEEP*** THAT FROM HAPPENING!

THERE **IS,** HOWEVER, **ONE** PERSON WHO JUST **MIGHT** RECOGNIZE ME! AND THAT'S THE **PSYCHO** WHO **PUT** ME IN HERE!

**I** MAY NOT REMEMBER WHAT **HE** LOOKS LIKE, BUT HE DOESN'T **KNOW** THAT! AND **HE** SURE AS **HELL** GOT A **GOOD LOOK** AT **ME!**

EVEN THOUGH THE POLICE RELEASED A **STATEMENT** THAT **ROBERT STILLMAN** WAS **WANTED** IN CONNECTION WITH MY ASSAULT, IF **THIS** GUY IS **STILL** AROUND HERE AND THINKS I **MAY** BE ABLE TO **ID** HIM, I COULD BE IN **TROUBLE** IF HE SPOTS ME!

I **THINK** I KNOW OF A WAY TO **KEEP** THAT FROM **HAPPENING!** BUT I'LL HAVE TO RUN IT BY **HANK** FIRST!


HEY THERE, GIRLFRIEND! HOW YOU DOING?
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL!
ALWAYS BETTER WHEN YOU ALL ARE AROUND!

HMMM! LOOKS LIKE THOSE PESKY **DARK ROOTS** OF YOURS ARE STARTING TO SHOW AGAIN! NEED ME TO **TOUCH 'EM UP?**

**REALLY?** CHANGE TO **WHAT?**

ACTUALLY, I'M THINKING OF **CHANGING** THE COLOR, SO LET'S **HOLD OFF** FOR AWHILE!

NOT **SURE** RIGHT NOW! BUT WE'LL TALK!


WE PASSED ABBY AND JILL IN THE HALL SO WE WON'T TIRE YOU WITH THE SAME QUESTIONS THEY ASKED!
THANK YOU!
BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ONLY THE THREE OF US CAN TALK ABOUT!
SO I WANTED TO GIVE YOU AN UPDATE ON EVERYTHING WE DISCUSSED EARLIER!

FIRST OFF, YOUR COLLEGE RECORDS ARE ALL IN PLACE AND IRON-CLAD! WE TWEAKED YOUR GRADES A LITTLE, BUT NOT ENOUGH TO CHANGE YOUR OVERALL GPA!

WE'VE ALSO FILLED IN YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY WITH A LOT MORE DETAIL! EDUCATIONAL RECORDS GOING BACK TO GRADE SCHOOL, FAMILY HISTORY, TAX RECORDS..IT'S ALL THERE!

DO I WANT TO ASK HOW YOU DID ALL THAT?

NO, YOU DON'T!

AND **WHAT** ABOUT "ROBERT"? **WHERE** IS HE?

TURNS OUT "ROBERT" **ISN'T** A VERY **SAVVY** FUGITIVE! HE LEFT A **CREDIT CARD** TRAIL **HALFWAY** ACROSS THE COUNTRY!

SO "HE'S" SOMEWHERE OUT **WEST?**

NOT ANYMORE! **SOMEONE** WHO MATCHES HIS DESCRIPTION **VERY, VERY CLOSELY** WAS CAPTURED ON SECURITY VIDEO IN **TIJUANA!**

SO, TO ALL APPEARANCES, **"ROBERT STILLMAN"** HAS **FLED** THE COUNTRY!

*SIGH!* WELL... AT LEAST **NO ONE** WILL **MISS** HIM!

I GUESS THAT'S **ONE** ADVANTAGE OF **NOT** HAVING ANY **FRIENDS** OR **FAMILY!**

THAT'S ***RIGHT!*** FAMILY THAT WILL ***STAND BESIDE HER*** AND ***SUPPORT*** HER IN ***EVERY WAY*** AS SHE NAVIGATES HER ***NEW LIFE!***

THAT MAY HAVE BEEN TRUE OF ROBERT, BUT ***ROBIN*** HAS ***PLENTY*** OF ***FRIENDS...*** AND ***FAMILY,*** WHO LOVE HER ***VERY MUCH!***

DON'T YOU ***EVER*** FORGET THAT!

***STOP IT!*** YOU'LL MAKE ME ***CRY!*** AND IF I CRY, I ***SNIFF!*** AND SNIFFING ***HURTS*** MY BROKEN NOSE! *SNIFF!*

***OUCH!***

BEFORE THE **NURSE** MAKES HER ROUNDS, THERE'S **SOMETHING** I NEED TO TALK TO YOU TWO ABOUT!

IT HAS TO DO WITH THE GUY WHO **ACTUALLY** PUT ME IN HERE!

I'VE GOT A **FEW** SOURCES LOOKING INTO THAT, BUT, TO BE TRUTHFUL, THERE'S **NOT MUCH** TO GO ON SO **FINDING** HIM IS A **STRETCH!**

I **KNOW!** BUT MY **MAIN** CONCERN IS **HIM** FINDING **ME!**

WE MADE SURE **YOUR** NAME WAS KEPT **OUT** OF THE PAPERS!

YES, BUT **HE** KNOWS WHAT **I** LOOK LIKE! AND I **DON'T** WANT TO KEEP **LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER** IN CASE HE THINKS **I** CAN **ID** HIM... WHICH **I CAN'T!**

**WHAT** DO YOU WANT TO **DO** ABOUT THAT?


I... I HAVE AN IDEA...

Later that day...

I'M **SORRY** I'M LATE FOR OUR APPOINTMENT, ROBIN! I GOT **TIED UP** WITH A COUPLE OF OTHER PATIENTS!

**THAT'S** OKAY, DOCTOR JOHNSON! IT JUST GAVE ME MORE TIME TO **CONSIDER** A FEW THINGS WE **TALKED** ABOUT THE OTHER DAY!


SO I TAKE IT YOU'VE MADE SOME **DECISIONS** REGARDING YOUR BREAST **AUGMENTATION** SURGERY!
YES, I HAVE!

NOT BEING ABLE TO ***RENEW*** THEM BEFORE MY ACCIDENT MADE ME REALIZE HOW ***MUCH*** I ***LOVED*** HAVING THEM!

SO I'M GOING TO TAKE ***YOUR*** ADVICE, AS WELL AS THE RECOMMENDATION OF MY ***CLOSEST FRIEND,*** AND GO WITH THE FULL ***"C" CUP!***

I THINK THAT'S AN ***EXCELLENT*** CHOICE!

I'LL CALL THE PLASTIC SURGEON AND SCHEDULE A MEETING BETWEEN THE ***THREE*** OF US LATER TODAY SO WE CAN WORK OUT ***DETAILS*** AND SCHEDULE A ***DATE AND TIME*** FOR THE PROCEDURE!

***GOOD!*** BECAUSE I'D ***ALSO*** LIKE TO DISCUSS HAVING A FEW ***OTHER*** PROCEDURES PERFORMED, IF POSSIBLE!

***REALLY?*** LIKE ***WHAT?***

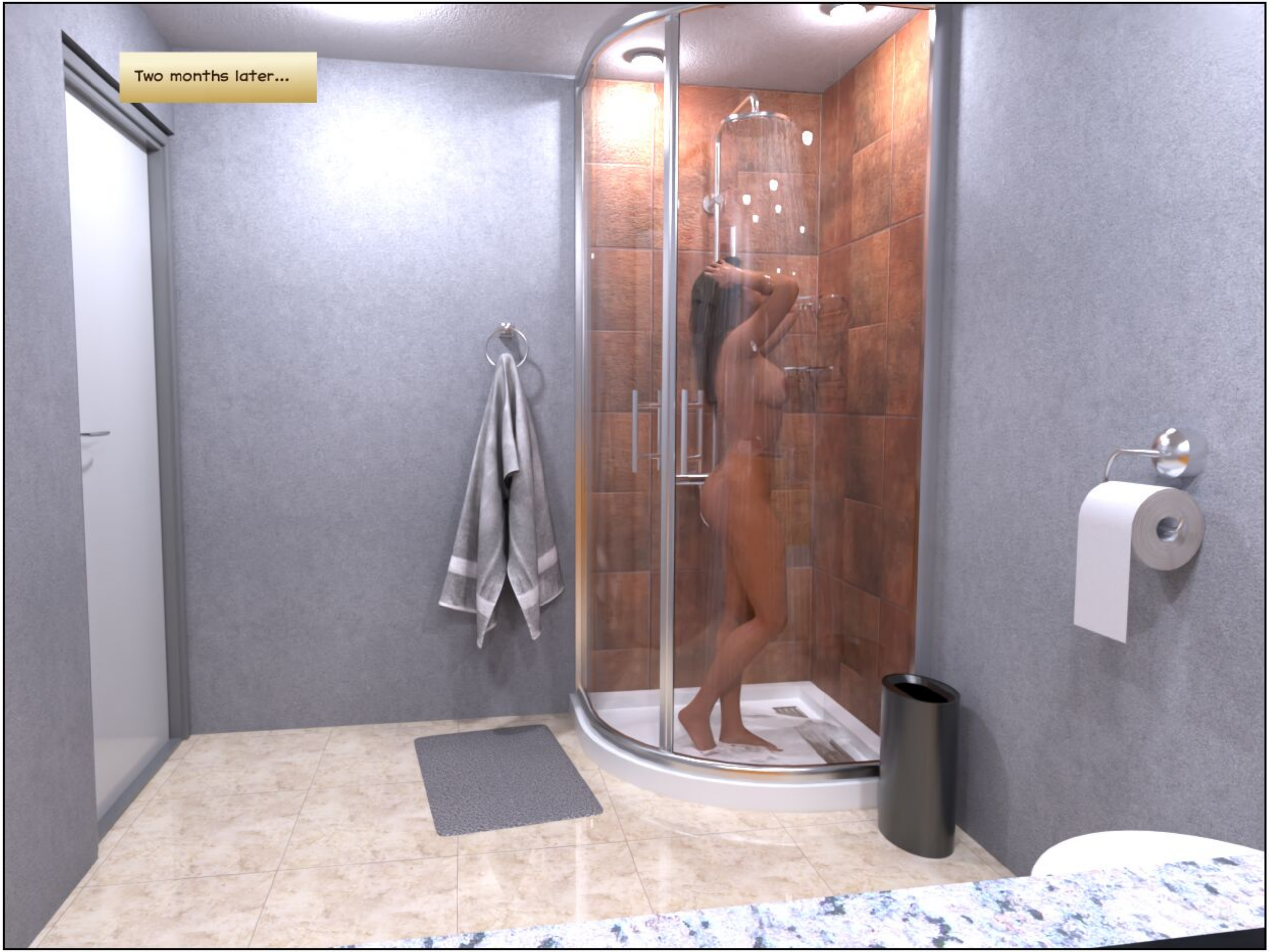

OH, JUST A FEW TWEAKS HERE AND THERE!

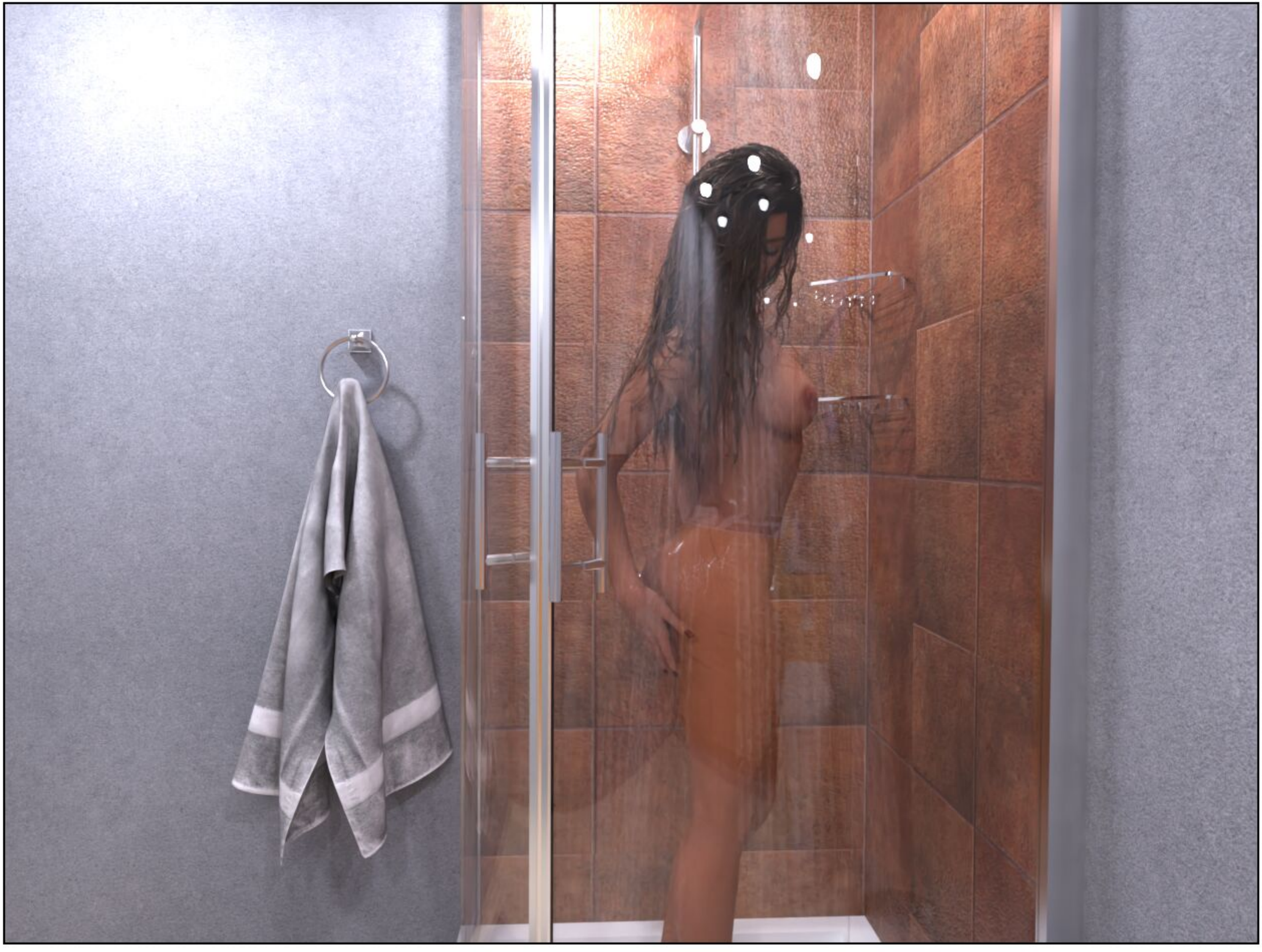


# A Miss-Judgement

## Part Three

by C. Black


Two months later...





THIS IS IT! I'VE BEEN GEARING UP FOR THIS DAY FOR WEEKS!

THANK GOD ABBY PULLED SOME STRINGS SO I COULD KEEP UP WITH THE FIRST MONTH'S COURSEWORK ONLINE WHILE I HEALED FROM MY SURGERIES!

OTHERWISE, THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I'D BE ABLE TO START THIS LATE AND MY WHOLE THIRD AND LAST YEAR WOULD BE SCREWED!

AND THIS BEING THE FIRST TIME ANYONE ON CAMPUS WILL ACTUALLY MEET "ROBIN SULLIVAN" ADDS A WHOLE NEW LAYER OF IMPORTANCE TO TODAY!

BEFORE I KNEW I WAS GOING TO BE ROBIN FOREVER, MY PLAN WAS FOR "ROBERT" TO BE AS UNOBTRUSIVE AS POSSIBLE THE WHOLE YEAR!

JUST SLINK INTO THE BACKGROUND, QUIETLY ATTEND MY CLASSES, AND BE A HERMIT IN THE APARTMENT HANK WAS GOING TO GET FOR ME!

EXCEPT FOR THE APARTMENT, PRETTY MUCH THE SAME WAY I'D BEEN LIVING MY LIFE EVERY DAY.. AS "ROBERT"!

BUT IT DIDN'T TAKE ME ***LONG*** TO REALIZE THAT BECOMING ROBIN IS MY ***SECOND CHANCE*** AT LIFE!

NOT JUST TO ***IMPROVE*** ON WHAT I'D STARTED, BUT TO BECOME ***SOMEONE*** WHO'S ESSENTIALLY THE ***ANTITHESIS*** OF WHO I ***USED*** TO BE!

SOMEONE WHO ISN'T ***CONTENT*** BEING RELEGATED TO THE ***BACKGROUND*** BUT ***INSTEAD*** CHOOSES TO ***ENJOY*** THE ***ATTENTION SHE DESERVES!***

ATTENTION I'M PRACTICALLY ***GUARANTEED*** THANKS TO ALL THE ***SURGERIES*** I ELECTED TO HAVE!

SINCE THE ACCIDENT DID A NUMBER ON MY ***NOSE, CHEEKS*** AND ***LIPS,*** IT ONLY MADE ***SENSE*** TO ASK THE DOCTORS TO MAKE ***SURE*** THEY HEALED IN A MUCH MORE ***AESTHETIC*** MANNER!

WHICH GIVES ME THE ***ADDED*** BONUS OF MY ATTACKER ***NEVER*** RECOGNIZING ME IN CASE WE ***ACCIDENTALLY*** CROSS PATHS AGAIN!

I PUT A ***LOT*** OF THOUGHT INTO HOW I WANT TO ***PRESENT*** MYSELF ON MY ***VERY FIRST DAY*** AND HAVE TRIED ***DOZENS*** OF DIFFERENT LOOKS!

AND THANKS TO ***NORA,*** I THINK I FINALLY ***NAILED*** WHO I THINK ***ROBIN SULLIVAN*** SHOULD BE GOING FORWARD!


NOW, IT'S JUST A MATTER OF SEEING IF I CAN PULL IT OFF!

A short time later, as students start to arrive for their ten o'clock class...

A few familiar faces are in attendence...

HOW COME **I** DIDN'T SEE YOU TWO **LOSERS** SCORING AT THE **CLUBS** THIS WEEKEND?

'CAUSE WE DON'T **NEED** TO HIT THE **CLUBS** TO SCORE! **THAT'S** WHAT **SORORITIES** ARE FOR! **DUH!**

**YEAH!** COMPARED TO THE CLUBS, **SORORITY PARTIES** ARE LIKE SHOOTING **FISH** IN A **BARREL!**

AND **WE** KNOW ALL THE **HOTTEST** SORORITIES! HEH-HEH!

MARCH MADNESS

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Integrated Technology For The Business Minded

OKAY, EVERYONE, IT'S ABOUT THAT TIME! SO **SETTLE IN** AND LET'S GET STARTED!

SO **WHEN** YOU GONNA START CLUEIN' **ME** IN TO THESE PARTIES? **HUH?** HEH-HEH!

**WHOA, DUDE!** CHECK OUT WHAT'S COMIN' THROUGH THE DOOR!


OKAY! HERE WE GO!
HOLY SHIT!

EXCUSE ME, PROFESSOR ROBINSON! I'M ROBIN SULLIVAN!

LIKEWISE! AND I WANT TO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR ALLOWING ME TO WORK VIRTUALLY THESE LAST 4 WEEKS!

AH, THE ELUSIVE MISS SULLIVAN! NICE TO FINALLY MEET YOU IN PERSON!

WELL, WHEN ABIGAIL MONROE VOUCHES FOR SOMEONE, YOU TAKE IT SERIOUSLY!

OH, ***I AM,*** PROFESSOR! I'VE KEPT UP ON ***ALL*** THE READINGS AND WATCHED ***ALL*** YOUR RECORDED LECTURES... ***REPEATEDLY!***

***YES, SIR!***

BUT ***THAT'S*** WHERE YOUR PRIVILEGE ***ENDS,*** MISS SULLIVAN! I EXPECT ***YOU*** TO BE AS ***FLUENT*** IN THE ASSIGNED CASES AS ***EVERYONE ELSE*** IN THIS CLASS!

***GOOD!*** BECAUSE, REST ASSURED, I ***WILL*** BE CALLING ON YOU TODAY TO PROVE ***JUST THAT!***

NOW ***PLEASE*** HAVE A SEAT SO WE CAN GET STARTED!


OH, ABBY! YOU OWE ME BIG TIME FOR THIS!

YEAH! I THINK I ABSOLUTELY NAILED THE IMPRESSION I WAS GOING FOR!

AFTER SPENDING THE BULK OF MY LIFE BEING ESSENTIALLY NON-EXISTENT TO THE WORLD, I THINK I'M DUE FOR MY TIME IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

AND THIS ENSEMBLE IS DEFINITELY DOING THE TRICK! *GIGGLE!*

About eighty minutes later...

I THINK WE'LL CALL IT A DAY, FOLKS! BUT ***PLEASE*** REMEMBER TO KEEP UP ON YOUR ***READINGS!***

IT'S PAINFULLY ***OBVIOUS*** THAT ***SOME*** OF YOU ARE ***NEGLECTING*** TO DO SO!

***DO BETTER*** NEXT TIME!


WELL, HE SURE WASN'T SHITTING WHEN HE SAID HE'D BE CALLING ON ME TODAY!
THANK GOD I WAS ONE OF THE FEW WHO DID KEEP UP ON THE READINGS!

MISS SULLIVAN, COULD I HAVE A ***WORD*** WITH YOU BEFORE YOU LEAVE?

UMM... OF COURSE, PROFESSOR!

UNFORTUNATELY, HIS ***DEADPAN*** RESPONSES GAVE ME ***NO CLUE*** AS TO WHETHER HE ***LIKED*** MY ANSWERS OR ***NOT!***

***UH-OH!*** LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO FIND OUT ***EXACTLY*** WHAT HE THOUGHT AFTER ALL!

I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU I WAS VERY ***IMPRESSED*** WITH YOUR ANSWERS TODAY! IT'S OBVIOUS YOU ***DID*** MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO STAY ***CURRENT*** WITH THE READINGS!

IN FACT, I BELIEVE ***YOU*** KNEW THE CASES BETTER THAN ANYONE ***ELSE*** IN CLASS! SO KEEP UP THE ***GOOD WORK!***

TH... ***THANK YOU,*** PROFESSOR ROBINSON! ***I WILL!***


OH MY GOD! I HAVE NEVER, EVER BEEN COMPLEMENTED BY A PROFESSOR BEFORE!
IN FACT, UNTIL A FEW MONTHS AGO, I DON'T REMEMBER RECEIVING ANY KIND OF POSITIVE FEEDBACK FOR ANYTHING!

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S BECAUSE OF HOW I **LOOK** NOW OR JUST BECAUSE I'M MAKING **BETTER CHOICES** WITH MY LIFE OR **BOTH!**

REGARDLESS, **IT'S WORKING!** AND I'M NOT **ABOUT** TO CHANGE A **THING!**

UMM... **HEY THERE!**

I'M **MAX** AND THIS IS **IAN!** WE WERE **BOTH** IN PROFESSOR ROBINSON'S CLASS WITH YOU AND WOULD **SWEAR** WE'D NEVER **SEEN** YOU IN THERE BEFORE!

**YEAH!** WE **DEFINITELY** WOULD'VE NOTICED SOMEONE LIKE **YOU** BEFORE! DIDN'T KNOW THEY ALLOWED **LATE STARTS** HERE!

*SIGH!* YEAH, **I** SPOTTED **YOU TWO** ASSHOLES IN THERE **ALSO** AND KNEW IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF **TIME** BEFORE YOU'D MAKE A **PITIFUL** ATTEMPT AT **HITTING** ON ME!

FORTUNATELY, **I** CAME **PREPARED!**

OH, **HI!** I'M **ROBIN!** AND I'M NOT **REALLY** A LATE START, AT LEAST NOT **TECHNICALLY!**

I'VE BEEN **STUDYING ABROAD** FOR THE LAST FEW MONTHS AND GOT **SPECIAL** PERMISSION TO FOLLOW MY CLASSES **VIRTUALLY** UNTIL I GOT BACK! WHICH I JUST **DID** THIS LAST WEEKEND!

I **SERIOUSLY** CONSIDERED **SHOOTING** YOU DICKWADS **DOWN** AGAIN LIKE I DID **EARLIER** THIS SUMMER, BUT THOUGHT **BETTER** OF IT!

I DIDN'T WANT **ANYTHING** ABOUT THE **NEW** ME TO **REMIND** YOU OF THE GIRL YOU SAW DRIVING **"ROBERT'S" CAR** THAT NIGHT!

OUT OF THE **COUNTRY,** HUH? THAT'S PRETTY **COOL!**

YOU KNOW, WE'RE HAVING A **PARTY** THIS WEEKEND! COULD BE THE **PERFECT** SETTING TO GET **RE-ACCLIMATED** TO THE GOOD OL' **U S OF A!** HEH-HEH!

**YEAH!** YOU SHOULD **DEFINITELY** COME BY!

YOU TWO ARE **SWEET** TO INVITE ME, BUT I'M **REALLY** GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE A **RAIN CHECK** ON THAT!

YOU SEE, I'VE **STILL** GOT SO **MUCH** TO CATCH UP ON THAT I'LL BE SPENDING MY NIGHTS **AND** WEEKENDS **STUDYING** FULL TIME FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS **AT LEAST!**

BUT **MAYBE** SOMETIME **AFTER** THAT!

GETTING YOUR **HOPES** UP **NOW** WILL MAKE **DASHING** THEM **LATER** SO MUCH **MORE SATISFYING!** *GIGGLE!*

*YEAH!* MOST *DEFINITELY!*


OKAY THEN!
♪BYE, GUYS!♫
OH, MAN!
THAT SHIT IS
WICKED HOT!
FUCK ME!

OH **YEAH!** THIS IS GOING **BETTER** THAN I EVER **IMAGINED!**

NOT **ONLY** HAVE I GOT **THOSE** TWO ASSWIPES **EATING** OUT OF MY **HANDS,** I'LL BET THEY'D EVEN EAT **CAT LITTER** IF I ASKED THEM!

IT'S **GOOD** TO BE **QUEEN!** *GIGGLE!*


WHOA! CHECK OUT THE ASS ON THAT FINE SPECIMAN!
SHAKE IT, GIRL! SHAKE IT!
FOR THE PERSON WHO TAUGHT ME *HOW* TO SHAKE IT? *ANYTIME!* *GIGGLE!*


WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I'M SO GLAD YOU DID!
YOU SAID YOU HAD A NINETY MINUTE BREAK FOR LUNCH TODAY, SO I THOUGHT I'D SURPRISE YOU!
I ALSO COULDN'T WAIT TO HEAR HOW YOUR FIRST DAYWAS GOING!


WELL,
LET ME GIVE
YOU THE
RUN DOWN...

Several minutes later...

I ***KNEW*** IT WOULDN'T TAKE YOU LONG TO ***DISCOVER*** YOUR NEW ***POWER!***

THE WAY YOU ***HANDLED*** YOUR EX-ROOMMATES WAS ***SUBLIME!***

OF COURSE, ***I*** WOULD'VE ***GROUND*** THE LITTLE SHITS UNDER MY ***HEEL,*** BUT ***THAT'S*** JUST ***ME!***

CAUGHT HIM SNEAKING ***PEAKS*** AT YOUR ***BOOBS,*** DID YOU?

YOU HAVE A ***LOT*** MORE CONFIDENCE IN ME THAN ***I*** DID!

***I*** WASN'T ***SURE*** OF ***ANYTHING*** UNTIL AFTER I ***FINALLY*** CAME ***FACE TO FACE*** WITH MY PROFESSOR!

AS A MATTER OF FACT, ***I DID!*** *GIGGLE!*

AFTER *YOU*, LADIES!

*UH-OH!* THIS SOUNDS *SERIOUS!*

OKAY! WHAT *IMPORTANT* THING DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?

YOU KNOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN *PUTTING OFF* TALKING TO YOU ABOUT! BUT AFTER HEARING HOW *WELL* YOUR MORNING WENT, I FIGURE *NOW'S* A GOOD A TIME AS *ANY!*

"SERIOUS" HAS SUCH *OMINOUS* CONNOTATIONS! I THINK "*IMPORTANT*" WORKS MUCH *BETTER* HERE!

YOUR *SEX LIFE!*


WOW! YOU'RE JUST GONNA JUMP RIGHT INTO IT, AREN'T YOU?
WELL, YOU NEVER TOLD ME ANYTHING ABOUT "ROBERT'S" SOCIAL LIFE, OR IF HE EVEN HAD ONE! WAS HE GAY, STRAIGHT, ASEXUAL? NONE OF THE ABOVE?
AND BEFORE YOUR OPERATION, "ROBIN'S" SEX LIFE WAS NON-EXISTENT, FOR THE OBVIOUS REASON!

I DIDN'T WANT TO BRING ANY OF THIS UP ***BEFORE*** YOUR TRANSITION BECAUSE YOU HAD ***MORE*** THAN ENOUGH ***ALREADY*** GOING ON!

BUT NOW THAT YOU'RE ROBIN ***FOR GOOD*** AND INTERACTING WITH THE ***WORLD,*** IT MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME TO ***TAKE STOCK*** OF YOURSELF AND SEE WHAT ***DIRECTION*** YOU WANT TO GO!

BECAUSE ***FACE IT,*** HONEY, YOU'RE ***ONE HOT PROPERTY!*** AS YOU'VE ***ALREADY*** SEEN WITH YOUR EX-***DOUCHEMATES,*** YOU'RE GOING TO ATTRACT A ***SHIT LOAD*** OF GUYS... AND MORE THAN A FEW ***GIRLS!***

YOU HAVE ***NOTHING*** TO ***HIDE*** ANYMORE AND ***ALL*** THE EQUIPMENT ***NECESSARY*** TO RESPOND... ***IF*** YOU ***CHOOSE*** TO!

DON'T THINK FOR A ***MINUTE*** THAT I ***HAVEN'T*** BEEN THINKING ABOUT ***EVERYTHING*** YOU JUST MENTIONED!

WHEN YOU HELPED ME ***BECOME*** ROBIN THIS SUMMER, I DISCOVERED THAT I ***LIKED*** THE ATTENTION I WAS STARTING TO GET!

BUT I DIDN'T FULLY ***APPRECIATE*** THE FACT THAT I ALWAYS HAD ***YOU*** AND THE ***GIRLS*** WITH ME WHEN WE WENT OUT TO ***KEEP*** ME FROM GETTING ***IN*** OVER MY ***HEAD!***

BECAUSE, TO ANSWER ***ONE*** OF YOUR QUESTIONS, "ROBERT" ***NEVER*** HAD ***ANY*** KIND OF SOCIAL LIFE, SO BEING ***POPULAR*** IS A COMPLETELY ***NEW,*** AND ***INTOXICATING,*** EXPERIENCE FOR ME!

***NO*** SOCIAL LIFE WHATSOEVER? ***REALLY?***

THE **CLOSEST** THING I EVER HAD THAT COULD EVEN **REMOTELY** BE CALLED A DATE WAS A **DISASTROUS** "HOOK-UP" ON A **MODEL U.N.** FIELD TRIP DURING MY SENIOR YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL!

THIS **ONE** GIRL, WHO WAS **JUST** TRYING TO GET BACK AT HER BOYFRIEND, INVITED **ME** TO HER HOTEL ROOM! EVEN THOUGH **I** KNEW **WHY** SHE ASKED ME UP, I WENT! WHY **WOULDN'T** I?

BUT WHEN MY **LACKADAISICAL** AND **PREMATURE** PERFORMANCE **FAILED** TO PROVIDE HER WITH THE REVENGE SHE WANTED, SHE **CHEERFULLY** PROVIDED DETAILS TO **ANYONE** AND **EVERYONE** WHO WOULD LISTEN!

**BITCH!**

HENCE MY **AVERSION** TO DATING... AT **LEAST** AS **ROBERT!**

OF **COURSE** I HAVE! THAT'S **ONE** OF THE REASONS I HAD THE **EXTRA PROCEDURES** DONE!

I ESSENTIALLY GOT **HOOKED** ON THE **ATTENTION** I GOT THIS SUMMER OF BEING A **PRETTY** GIRL! SO WHEN I GOT THE CHANCE TO BECOME A **BEAUTIFUL** GIRL, I **JUMPED** AT IT!

DOES **THAT** MAKE ME A **SHALLOW** PERSON?

SO YOU **HAVE** BEEN THINKING ABOUT DATING?

***HARDLY!*** IT MAKES YOU **HUMAN,** BABE! **JUST** LIKE THE **REST** OF US!

CONSIDERING MY **LACK** OF EXPERIENCE, I **WOULDN'T** SAY I'M "INTO" **EITHER**... AT LEAST NOT YET!

BUT I AM **WILLING** TO **EXPERIMENT!** *GIGGLE!*

SO, **THAT** BRINGS UP THE **MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION**... ARE YOU INTO **GUYS, GIRLS,** OR **BOTH?**

**THAT'S** WHAT I **LIKE** TO HEAR!

JUST TO BE CLEAR, I'M **NOT** LOOKING FOR A SERIES OF **ONE NIGHT STANDS!**

BESIDES THE **HANDFUL** OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN THE **CENTER** OF MY LIFE THESE LAST FEW MONTHS, **INCLUDING YOU** OF COURSE, I'VE **NEVER** FELT **INTIMATE** OR EVEN **CLOSE** TO ANYONE BEFORE!

I WANT TO GO ON **ACTUAL DATES** AND MAKE **CONNECTIONS** WITH PEOPLE! IF SEX HAPPENS, THEN IT HAPPENS! BUT IT'S **FURTHER DOWN** ON MY LIST! MAYBE **THIRD** OR EVEN **FOURTH!**

OKAY, **SECOND** ON MY LIST! *GIGGLE!*

I **GET** IT, ROBIN! I **REALLY** DO!

BUT TRUST ME, WITH THAT *FACE* AND THAT *BOD*, FINDING A *DATE* WILL BE A *PIECE OF CAKE!*

A couple of days later...

BUT I ***WANT*** TO COME IN AND WORK FOR A FEW HOURS AT LEAST, JILL!

IT'S ***EARLY*** AND I'M ***DONE*** WITH CLASSES FOR THE DAY!

YES, I'M ALL ***CAUGHT UP*** ON MY READINGS! IN FACT, I'M A FEW DAYS ***AHEAD!***

***GREAT!*** I SHOULD BE THERE IN ABOUT AN HOUR AFTER I STOP BY HOME AND CHANGE!

SEE YOU THEN!

THE NEAREST **ÖBER** IS **FIFTEEN MINUTES AWAY?** WELL, **SHIT!** LOOKS LIKE IT'LL TAKE ME **MORE** THAN AN HOUR TO GET TO WORK!

**EXCUSE** ME! I DIDN'T MEAN TO **EAVESDROP,** BUT IF YOU'RE IN A **HURRY** TO GET SOMEWHERE, I'D BE **MORE** THAN HAPPY TO GIVE YOU A **LIFT!**

I'M PARKED **ONLY** ABOUT A HALF BLOCK AWAY!

**OH!** UMMM... I DON'T KNOW IF **THAT'S** SUCH A **GOOD** IDEA! I TRY TO **AVOID** GETTING INTO CARS WITH **STRANGERS!**

I'M **SURE** YOU UNDERSTAND!

I'M UHH... **ROBIN SULLIVAN!** THIRD YEAR LAW STUDENT!

A **COUPLE** OF TIMES? **REALLY?** THAT SOUNDS VERY **STALKER-ESQUE!**

I **GUESS** THAT MAKES SENSE!

I DO **COMPLETELY!** **YOU** DON'T KNOW **ME** FROM ADAM! WHICH, COINCIDENTALLY, **IS** MY NAME, BY THE WAY...**ADAM NIELSON!** I'M A GRAD STUDENT HERE!

I **THOUGHT** I'D SEEN YOU COMING OUT OF THE **LAW SCHOOL** A COUPLE OF TIMES!

I AGREE IT **MIGHT,** IF I **WEREN'T** STUDYING HEALTH AND SPORTS TRAINING WHICH IS IN THE BUILDING **RIGHT NEXT** TO THE LAW SCHOOL!

LOOK, YOU'RE **OBVIOUSLY** A VERY **CAREFUL** WOMAN, AND I **RESPECT** THAT! BUT I'D ALSO **VERY MUCH** LIKE TO TAKE YOU **OUT** SOMETIME!

SO WHAT **I'M** THINKING IS THAT **YOU** COULD TAKE A FEW DAYS AND **VET ME,** AS ANY GOOD **LAWYER** MIGHT, AND THEN CALL ME **IF** YOU THINK I'M **SAFE ENOUGH!**

BUT... I **DON'T** KNOW YOUR **NUMBER!**

YOU DO NOW!

Beep

I ***REALLY*** HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU AGAIN, BUT IF I ***DON'T***, IT WAS ***NICE*** MEETING YOU, ROBIN SULLIVAN! IF ONLY FOR A ***SHORT*** AMOUNT OF TIME!

OH, AND I HOPE YOU GET TO YOUR ***APPOINTMENT*** ON TIME!

WHAT THE ***HELL*** JUST HAPPENED? I FEEL LIKE A VICTIM OF A ***HIT-AND-RUN!***

BUT I GUESS IT WAS ***REALLY*** MORE OF A ***"HIT ON ME*** AND ***WALK AWAY"*** SCENARIO INSTEAD!

AND ***I*** STOOD HERE LIKE A ***DEER*** CAUGHT IN ***HEADLIGHTS!***

IF I'M ***SERIOUS*** ABOUT ***JOINING*** THE DATING WORLD, I'VE ***GOT*** TO BE MORE ***ON THE BALL*** WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY ARISES!

STANDING AROUND LOOKING ***GOBSMACKED*** IS ***NOT*** GOING TO CUT IT!



Buzz






Robin Sullivan
12:35 PM
12:34 PM
Santini's on Third Saturday night at 8.
I'll meet you there.

Later that afternoon...

ROBIN? OH MY GOD, I BARELY RECOGNIZED YOU!

JILL SAID YOU HAD SOME WORK DONE BECAUSE OF THAT HORRIBLE ACCIDENT, BUT I HAD NO CLUE YOU'D COME OUT LOOKING SO AMAZING!

WELL, THE FACT THAT YOU'RE HEALTHY IS THE BEST PART!

WELL, I WAS VERY, VERY LUCKY! AND THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE COMPLIMENT!

YES... YES, IT IS!


WELL IT'S GREAT TO HAVE YOU BACK!
THANKS, SHIRLEY! IT'S WONDERFUL TO BE BACK!

I'M SO **GLAD** ABBY AND JILL **JUST** TOLD EVERYONE THAT I WAS THE VICTIM OF A **HIT-AND-RUN** ACCIDENT AND **NOT** AN ATTEMPTED **SEXUAL ASSAULT!**

I DON'T THINK I COULD **HANDLE** ALL THE **SYMPATHETIC** LOOKS, THE **CONDOLENSCES** AND THE CONSTANT **REMINDERS** OF WHAT **ALMOST** HAPPENED TO ME!

PUTTING THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE **BEHIND ME** IS THE **BEST** PATH MOVING FORWARD!


THERE YOU ARE, ROBIN! ABBY WANTS TO SEE THE TWO OF US IN HER OFFICE!
OKAY! CAN I LAVE MY IPAD IN YOUR OFFICE?
BE MY GUEST!


YOU LOOK ADORABLE TODAY, BY THE WAY! I LOVE THE NEW HAIR COLOR ON YOU!
THANKS! I WANTED SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT AND IT'S A LITTLE CLOSER TO MY NATURAL COLOR!
DID ABBY SAY WHAT THIS WAS ABOUT?
NO! SHE JUST SAID SHE HAD A COUPLE OF THINGS SHE WANTED TOSHARE WITH US!
CRYPTIC AS ALWAYS, THAT PARTNER OF MINE IS!

WE WHO HAVE BEEN SUMMONED, **OBEY!**

ACCEPTANCE FOR **WHAT?**

OH, **HUSH!** I'M ALMOST DONE PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THIS **ACCEPTANCE** SPEECH!

A VERY **POORLY** KEPT **SECRET** AROUND HERE IS THAT THE **STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY** HAS BEEN CONSIDERING **ME** AS THEIR **CANDIDATE** FOR THE **STATE'S ATTORNEY GENERAL** POSITION!

**WHAT? YOU?** WHY, **I** HAD **NO IDEA!**

WELL AREN'T **YOU** FULL OF VINEGAR TODAY!

CAN'T HELP IT! THE DELI WAS **OUT** OF **BLEU CHEESE** DRESSING FOR MY SALAD TODAY, SO I HAD TO **SETTLE** FOR **ITALIAN** INSTEAD!

*SIGH!* IN **ANY** CASE, AFTER GIVING IT SOME THOUGHT, I'VE DECIDED TO **ACCEPT** THEIR OFFER AND **RUN FOR OFFICE!**

OH MY GOD! THAT'S **WONDERFUL**, ABBY! THEY **COULDN'T** HAVE PICKED A **BETTER** CANDIDATE!

**THANK YOU**, DEAR! THE SUPPORT OF **YOU, JILL** AND THE **REST** OF MY FAMILY MEANS THE **WORLD** TO ME!

UNFORTUNATELY, THE COMMITTEE ***INSISTS*** ON MAKING A ***HUGE*** DEAL OUT OF THE WHOLE THING, SO THEY'RE THROWING A ***PARTY*** FOR ME ***TONIGHT!*** I ***PLEADED*** WITH THEM ***NOT*** TO, BUT THEY INSISTED!

THE ***ONLY*** WAY I CAN ***ENDURE*** IT IS IF I'M ***SURROUNDED*** BY THOSE ***CLOSEST*** TO ME, WHICH, ***OF COURSE,*** INCLUDES ***YOU TWO!***

GETTING ALL ***DOLLED UP*** AND LOOKING ***FANTASTIC*** FOR THE PRESS? *SIGH!* IF WE ***MUST!***

ARE YOU ***SURE*** YOU WANT ***ME*** THERE, TOO, ABBY?

OF ***COURSE***, ROBIN! ***YOU'RE*** LIKE ***FAMILY***, AND I WANT MY ***WHOLE*** FAMILY TO BE THERE BESIDE ME!

AND WHILE YOU'RE HERE, I WANT TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE ***MORE*** GOOD NEWS!

REALLY? WHAT ***IS*** IT?

MY SOURCES HAVE TRACKED **STILLMAN** TO A MEXICAN **BOARDER CROSSING** IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA!

OH! HE **LEFT** THE COUNTRY? WELL... **GOOD RIDDANCE!**

OH, I'M **NOT** LETTING HIM OFF **THAT** EASY! I'VE GOT **CONTACTS** IN **MEXICO** THAT CAN **TRACK** THAT DEGENERATE DOWN AND **HAUL HIM** BACK UP **HERE** TO FACE **JUSTICE** FOR WHAT HE **TRIED** TO DO TO **YOU!**

BUT... ARE YOU SURE HE'S **WORTH** ALL THAT TROUBLE? PERSONALLY,**I'M** READY TO PUT IT **ALL** BEHIND ME!

I UNDERSTAND, DEAR! BUT CHANCES ARE, HE'S **DONE** THIS WITH **OTHER** GIRLS, AND MAY STILL **TRY AGAIN!** SO I'M **NOT** GOING TO **STOP** UNTIL HE'S **BEHIND BARS!**

CRAP, CRAP, CRAP! I CAN'T LET HER KEEP WASTING TIME AND MONEY CHASING A GHOST!

I KNOW I SHOULD PROBABLY TALK TO HANK FIRST, BUT...

YOU HAVE TO STOP CHASING HIM, ABBY! PLEASE!

BECAUSE... ROBERT STILLMAN DOESN'T EXIST! AT LEAST NOT ANYMORE!

BUT WHY, DEAR?

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

THERE'S **SOMETHING** I **HAVE** TO TELL YOU BOTH! SOMETHING I **SHOULD'VE** TOLD YOU A COUPLE OF **MONTHS** AGO!

Later, after a long, thorough, and emotionally draining confession...

SO WHAT ***YOU'RE*** SAYING IS, IF NOT FOR A CRUEL ***PRANK*** PULLED BY YOUR EX-ROOMMATES, ROBIN SULLIVAN ***WOULDN'T*** EVEN ***EXIST!*** DO ***I*** HAVE THAT ***RIGHT?***

ULTIMATELY...***YES!*** BUT I WANT TO ***STRESS*** THAT IT WAS ***MY*** DECISION ***NOT*** TO TELL YOU ALL THIS WHEN YOU STARTED ***HUNTING*** FOR ROBERT STILLMAN!

HANK AND NORA ***WANTED*** TO TELL YOU, BUT ***I*** CONVINCED THEM ***NOT*** TO SO AS NOT TO ***TAINT*** ABBY'S POSSIBLE NOMINATION!

I'M **SURE** IT WON'T MAKE **ANY** DIFFERENCE, BUT **LYING** TO YOU, **BOTH** OF YOU, IS THE **HARDEST** THING I'VE **EVER** HAD TO DO IN MY **ENTIRE** LIFE!

AND I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I'LL **NEVER** FORGIVE MYSELF FOR **VIOLATING** THE **TRUST** YOU PUT IN ME... AS AN **EMPLOYEE**, A **FRIEND**, AND A... A **FAMILY** MEMBER!


*SOB!*

YOU'VE BEEN AWFULLY QUIET THROUGH ALL OF THIS! WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

*SIGH!* I THINK AN EASIER QUESTION WOULD BE, WHAT AM I NOT THINKING!

BUT, SINCE I'VE JUST TOLD THE DCCC THAT I'M RUNNING FOR OFFICE, I HAVE TO FOCUS ON WHAT THIS REVELATION MEANS IN THAT REGARD!

AS MUCH AS I **ABHOR** LYING, ROBIN'S FIRST INSTINCT **NOT** TO TELL US OR ANYONE **ELSE** THE TRUTH ABOUT "ROBERT" WAS PROBABLY THE **RIGHT** THING TO DO!

ALTHOUGH **TECHNICALLY** NO LAWS WERE BROKEN, THE **MEDIA** WOULD'VE HAD A **FIELD DAY** WITH THIS! PUTTING A **STAIN** ON **OUR** FIRM'S **REPUTATION** AND POSSIBLY **RUINING** ROBIN'S **LIFE!**

**BOTH** OF WHICH **I** WOULD **ALSO** HAVE DONE PRETTY MUCH **ANYTHING** TO KEEP FROM HAPPENING! SO I CAN **SOMEWHAT** UNDERSTAND THE **MOTIVATION** BEHIND EVERYTHING ROBIN HAS JUST TOLD US!

BUT THAT **DOESN'T** MEAN I'M **HAPPY** ABOUT IT! ON THE CONTRARY, I'M **FURIOUS** THAT ALL THIS WAS GOING ON **BEHIND MY BACK!**

HANK'S INVOLVEMENT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME ALL THAT MUCH! HE HAS, AFTER ALL, BEEN A POLITICAL OPERATIVE MOST OF HIS LIFE, WORKING ON CAMPAIGNS FOR GOVERNORS, SENATORS AND EVEN A PRESIDENT!

YOURS, ON THE OTHER HAND, THROWS ME FOR A COMPLETE LOOP! I'M SADDENED, FRUSTRATED AND DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED IN YOU, ROBIN!

I... I UNDERSTAND, ABBY! *SNIFF!*


WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO THE CARRIAGE HOUSE AND PACK MY THINGS! DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE GONE BEFORE YOU GET HOME!
YOU WILL, HUH? WELL, THAT'S DAMNED INCONVENIENT!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I'D MUCH RATHER WE ALL WENT TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT PARTY TOGETHER RATHER THAN HAVING TO SEND A CAR TO WHERE EVER IT IS YOU THINK YOU'RE MOVING TO!
I... I DON'T GET IT! YOU STILL WANT ME TO GO TO THE PARTY? AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE JUST TOLD YOU?

ROBIN, DARLING! EVERY ***FRIENDSHIP***... EVERY ***FAMILY*** HAS ***ISSUES*** AND ***CONFLICTS*** THEY HAVE TO DEAL WITH! IT'S WHAT ***STRENGTHENS*** RELATIONSHIPS!

NOTHING ***YOU*** DID WAS DONE WITH ***MALICE!*** IN FACT, ***EVERYTHING*** THAT BROUGHT YOU TO ***THIS*** POINT... BROUGHT ***US*** TO THIS POINT, WAS A RESULT OF ***YOU*** DOING WHAT YOU THOUGHT WAS ***BEST*** FOR ***ME!***

SO, YES, I ***STILL*** WANT YOU TO GO TO THE ***PARTY*** WITH US! I ***STILL*** WANT YOU TO WORK ***HERE!*** I ***STILL*** WANT YOU TO LIVE IN THE ***CARRIAGE HOUSE!***


AND, OF COURSE, I STILL WANT YOU TO BE LIKE A SISTER TO NORA... TO BE ONE OF THE DAUGHTERS HANK AND I COULD NEVER HAVE!

*SNIFF!* I... I **DON'T** KNOW WHAT TO **SAY,** ABBY!

*GIGGLE!* I'LL **DO** THAT! **THANK YOU,** ABBY!

**YOU** DON'T HAVE TO SAY **ANYTHING!** JUST GO FIND **NORA** AND GET YOURSELVES SOME **OUTFITS** FOR TONIGHT!

**REMIND** HER THAT IT'S **SEMI-FORMAL,** SO NONE OF THE **USUAL** GET-UPS SHE LIKES TO WEAR!

DON'T MENTION IT! NOW **SCOOT!**

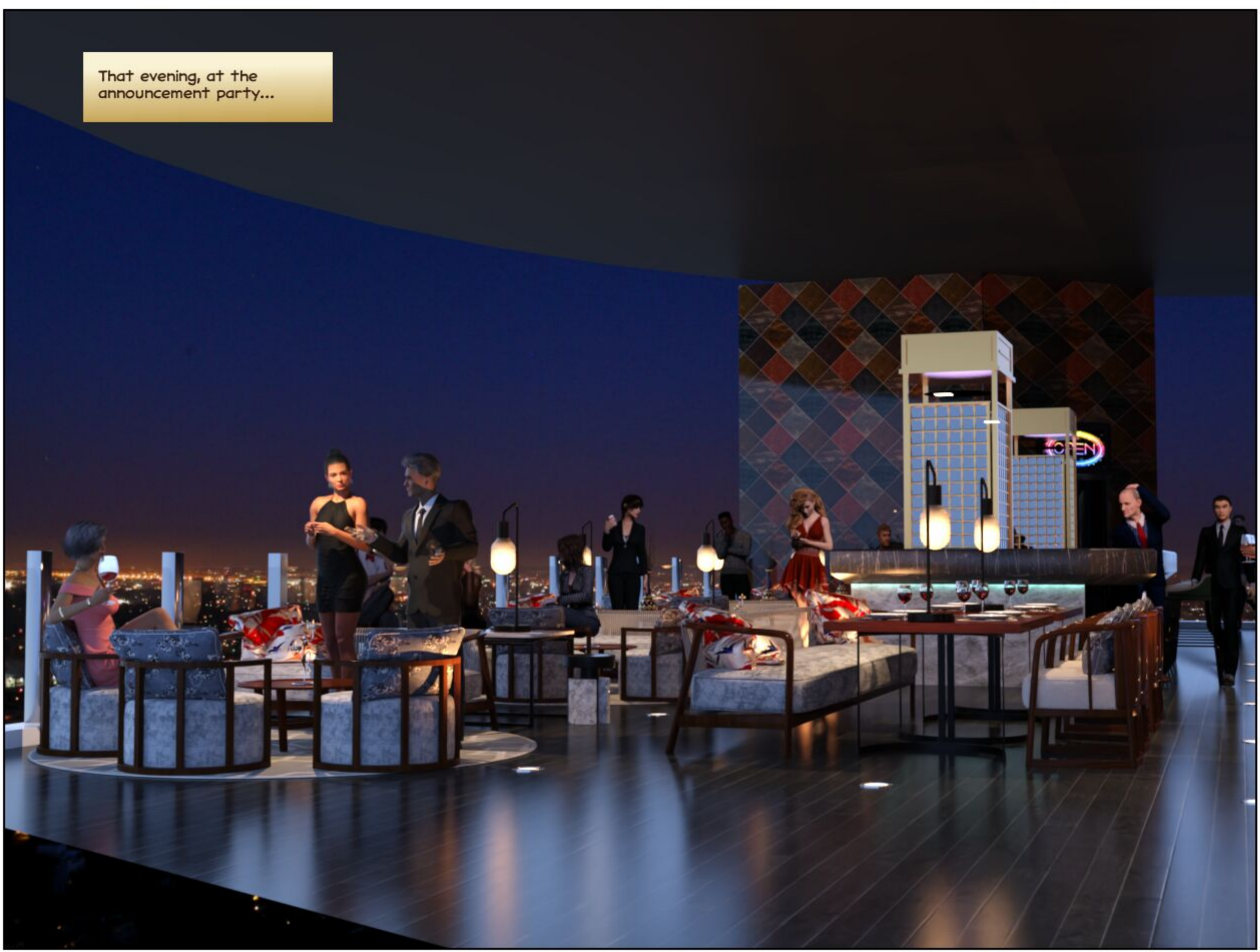
I *DON'T* THINK SHE *HEARD* YOU!

I'M *SURE* SHE KNOWS THAT, DEAR!

*DITTO* WHAT *SHE* SAID!

WELL THE *SENTIMENT* WAS STILL THERE!

That evening, at the announcement party...



YOUR ACCEPTANCE SPEECH WAS **PERFECT,** ABBY! I **COULDN'T** BE **PROUDER** OF YOU!

YES, **I KNOW!** YOU'VE **TOLD** ME THAT **SEVERAL** TIMES TONIGHT!

**AND** IF MEMORY SERVES, **I'VE** TOLD **YOU** EACH TIME THAT I'D **PREFER** TO KEEP **ANY** CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN US TO A **MINIMUM** UNTIL WE GET HOME!

**THEN** YOU AND I WILL HAVE A NICE LONG **CHAT** ABOUT **EVERYTHING** YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING FROM ME THESE LAST **FEW MONTHS!**

I *SAID* WHEN WE GET *HOME!* UNTIL THEN, JUST *SMILE* AND *PRETEND* YOU *WON'T* BE SLEEPING IN THE *GUEST ROOM* FOR THE NEXT WEEK!

NOW, MAKE YOURSELF *USEFUL* AND GO GET ME A DRINK!

I'M *SORRY* YOU HAD TO FIND OUT THIS WAY, ABBY! IT'S JUST THAT...

YES, DEAR!

YOU KNOW, EVERYTHING HE DID **WAS** IN **YOUR** BEST INTEREST! SO YOU **MIGHT** WANT TO CUT HIM A LITTLE **SLACK!**

ONE WEEK IN THE GUEST ROOM **IS** CUTTING HIM SOME SLACK! AND I'LL **PROBABLY** LET HIM OFF AFTER JUST A COUPLE OF DAYS WITH **GOOD BEHAVIOR!**

BUT I **CAN'T** JUST LET THIS **SLIDE** UNTIL I KNOW **EVERY DETAIL** OF WHAT THIS **LATEST** CONTRIVANCE OF HIS ENTAILED!

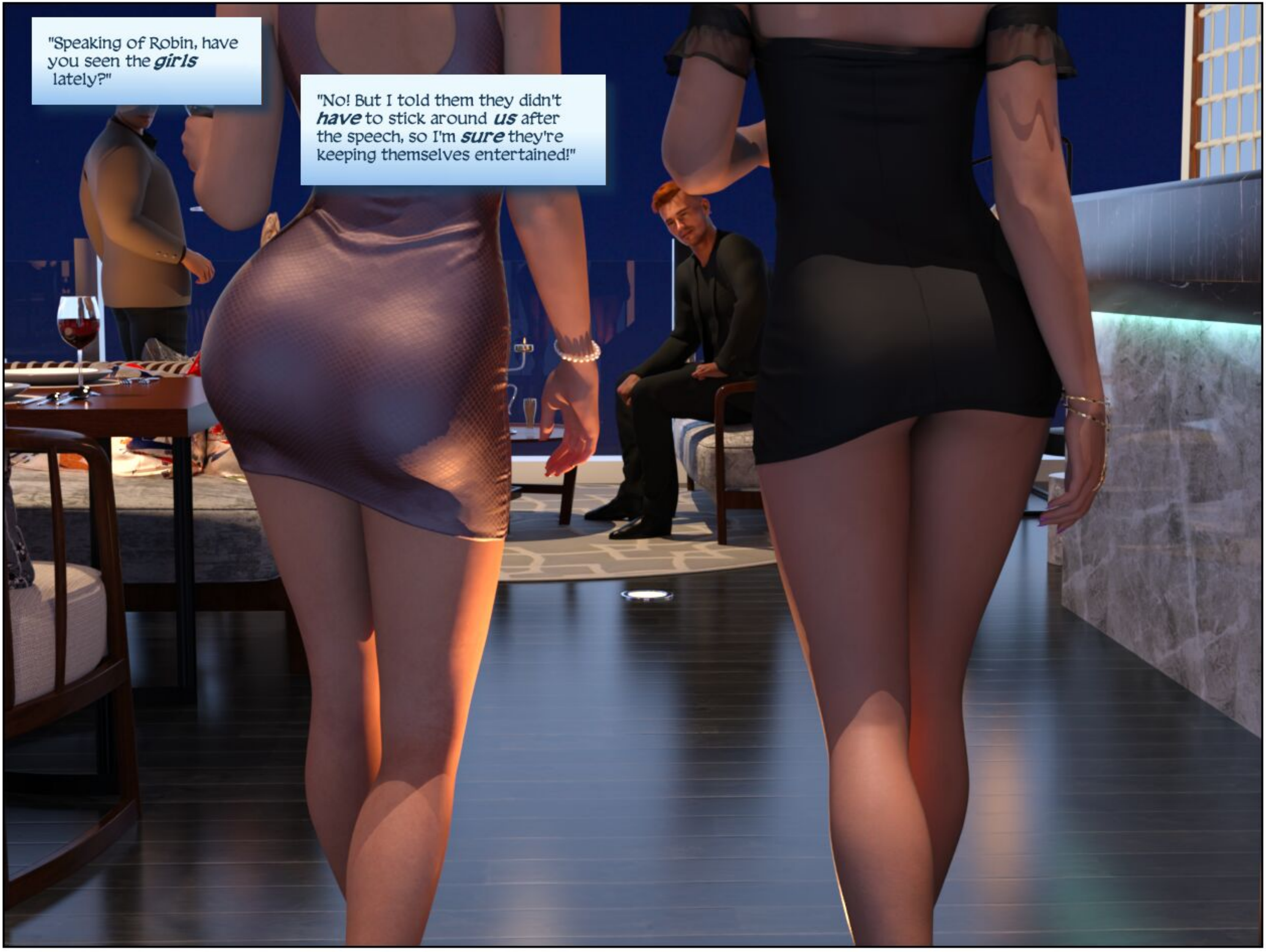
FOR GOD'S SAKE, JILL, HE INVOLVED HIS **NIECE** THIS TIME... **AND** A **COMPLETE STRANGER!**


TRUE! BUT THAT "COMPLETE STRANGER" BECAME A WONDERFUL YOUNG LADY WHOM YOU'VE REFERRED TO AS FAMILY ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION!
SO REGARDLESS OF WHETHER HANK'S PLAN GOT YOU THE NOMINATION OR NOT, IT DID ADD ROBIN TO OUR MERRY LITTLE GROUP!
I'D CALL THAT A MAJOR WIN!

I DO **TOO!** AND IT'S THE **MAIN** REASON I **HAVEN'T** GONE **BALLISTIC** WITH HANK!

*SIGH!* I SWEAR, THAT MAN LEADS A **CHARMED** LIFE!

WHICH **MAY** BE CONSIDERABLY **SHORTER** THAN HE'D LIKE IF HE **DOESN'T** GET HERE WITH MY DRINK **TOUT DE SWEET!**


"Speaking of Robin, have you seen the *girls* lately?"
"No! But I told them they didn't *have* to stick around *us* after the speech, so I'm *sure* they're keeping themselves entertained!"

WELL I THINK IT'S ***AWESOME*** YOU'RE ***FINALLY*** TAKING THE PLUNGE AND GOING ON A ***DATE***... WITH A ***GUY*** EVEN!

WHAT MADE YOU SAY "YES" TO ***THIS*** PARTICULAR GUY?

HEY, ***THAT'S*** ALL IT TAKES IN ***MY*** BOOK! *GIGGLE!*

YEAH, I KIND OF ***SURPRISED*** MYSELF!

I DON'T KNOW! HE WAS ***NICE***, HE WAS ***GOOD LOOKING***, AND HE ***ASKED!***


OPEN
BUT NOW THAT I'VE HAD SOME TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT, I REALIZE I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO ACT ON A DATE!
LIKE I TOLD YOU THE OTHER DAY, I'VE NEVER BEEN ON A REAL DATE BEFORE... AND ESPECIALLY NOT AS A GIRL!
THAT WAS DIFFERENT! I HAD NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF MAKING A CONNECTION WITH ANY OF THOSE GUYS! I JUST WANTED TO LEARN TO DANCE!
AND BESIDES, I HAD YOU ALL THERE TO BACK ME UP JUST IN CASE!
SO WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?
I DON'T KNOW... YOU ALWAYS HANDLED YOURSELF PRETTY WELL WHENEVER WE HIT THE CLUBS!
WHICH YOU DID VERY HANDILY, I MIGHT ADD!
YEAH, NO BACK-UP THIS TIME!

WHAT YOU **LACK**, GRASSHOPPER, IS **CONFIDENCE!** AND THE **BEST** WAY TO BUILD CONFIDENCE IS THROUGH **PRACTICE!**

IF YOU **THINK** ABOUT IT, DATING IS JUST A ONE-ON-ONE **SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT** WHERE TWO PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO GET TO **KNOW** EACH OTHER **OR** TRYING TO GET **LAID!**

WE'RE IN A **PRIME** ENVIRONMENT FOR YOU TO PRACTICE FOR THE **FORMER** SINCE I ASSUME YOU'RE **NOT** LOOKING TO SCORE THE **LATTER** YOUR FIRST TIME OUT!

**PRACTICE?** MY DATE IS **SATURDAY!** HOW DO I PRACTICE **DATING** IN JUST **THREE DAYS?**

AND YOU'D BE **SO** RIGHT!


SO, YOU ALREADY KNOW HOW TO FLIRT! I'VE SEEN YOU DO IT AND YOU'RE A PRO!
THAT'S WHAT YOU HAVE TO PRACTICE! FLIRTING THAT EVOLVES INTO MORE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS!
GUYS LOVE TO TALK ABOUT THEMSELVES! SO IT USUALLY DOESN'T TAKE LONG BEFORE YOU REALIZE IF YOU REALLY DO WANT TO GET TO KNOW HIM OR JUST PLAY ALONG UNTIL YOUR "HEADACHE" KICKS IN!
WELL, YEAH! BUT IT'S ALWAYS BEEN RELATIVELY BRIEF AND DISINGENUOUS!
THAT MAKES SENSE, BUT AGAIN... HOW AM I GOING TO PRACTICE THAT BEFORE SATURDAY?

IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, WE'RE ***AT*** A SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT ***LOADED*** WITH GUYS WHO'VE BEEN ***EYEING*** US EVER SINCE WE GOT HERE!

WHICH GIVES YOU ***AMPLE*** OPPORTUNITY TO PICK ONE OF THEM, USE YOUR ***COQUETTISH*** SKILLS TO STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION, AND ACTUALLY ***LISTEN*** TO HIM SO YOU CAN HOPEFULLY STOP ***FEIGNING*** INTEREST AND ACTUALLY ***ENJOY*** HIS COMPANY!

AND SINCE THE NIGHT IS YOUNG, ***MAYBE*** TRY IT WITH A ***SECOND*** GUY! ***HELL,*** MAYBE EVEN A ***THIRD!*** IT'S A SAUSAGE ***SMORGASBORD*** HERE TONIGHT! *GIGGLE!*

JUST TO BE CLEAR, I'M ***NOT*** ASKING YOU TO ***HOOK UP*** WITH ***ANY*** OF THESE GUYS TONIGHT! JUST GET COMFORTABLE ***TALKING*** TO THEM ***WITHOUT*** HAVING TO ***FAKE*** ANYTHING!

THINK YOU CAN ***DO*** THAT?

WELL, BETTER TO TRY AND FAIL ***TONIGHT*** THAN ON ***SATURDAY!*** RIGHT?

***THAT'S*** THE CONFIDENCE I WANTED TO HEAR! *GIGGLE!*


*SIGH!* WISH ME LUCK!
GOOD LUCK, BESTIE! NOT THAT YOU NEED IT!


OPEN


A GLASS OF CHARDONNEY, PLEASE!
COMING RIGHT UP!


EXCUSE ME, BUT DIDN'T I SEE YOU ARRIVE WITH THE MONROES?
OH! UMMM... YES, I DID! ABBY AND HANK HAVE KIND OF TAKEN ME UNDER THEIR WING SINCE I CLERKED FOR HER THIS SUMMER!
THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME! THEY'RE BOTH REMARKABLE PEOPLE!
YES... YES THEY ARE! VERY REMARKABLE!


MY NAME'S CALVIN LEEDS! I'M ONE OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE STATE DEMS!
DOES THAT MAKE YOU ONE OF THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR GETTING ABBY NOMINATED?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, IT DOES!
THEN IT'S VERY NICE TO MEET YOU, CALVIN! MY NAME'S ROBIN! ROBIN SULLIVAN!


SO, CALVIN... TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF!


As the evening progresses and her confidence builds, Robin discovers a new set of social skills she didn't know she had...

Initiating and maintaining conversations with people, especially ***men,*** is remarkably easy...

So she practices...

A lot...


IT'S GETTING LATE, CHICA! READY TO GO?
I GUESS SO! GOT AN EARLY CLASS TOMORROW!


IT WAS GREAT MEETING YOU, ROBIN! I HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN SOMETIME!
MOST DEFINITELY!
WELL THAT'S ENTIRELY UP TO YOU! DO YOU REMEMBER MY NUMBER?
OKAY THEN! ♫'BYE!♪


LOOK AT YOU! GIVING A GUY YOUR PHONE NUMBER!
I'D SAY YOU MADE SOME SERIOUS PROGRESS TONIGHT!
YEAH! TURNS OUT IT REALLY WASN'T AS HARD AS I THOUGHT IT'D BE!

I COULD **TELL!** YOU AND WILL LOOKED PRETTY **COZY** BACK THERE!

OKAY, JUST **HOW MANY** GUYS DID YOU **MEET** TONIGHT? AND **HOW MANY** DID YOU GIVE YOUR **NUMBER** TO?

I ADMIT I **WAS** A LITTLE NERVOUS WITH **CALVIN,** HE WAS THE **FIRST** GUY! BUT BY THE TIME I STRUCK UP A CONVERSATION WITH **WILL,** EVERY **RESERVATION** I HAD WAS **GONE!**

OH, **THAT** WASN'T **WILL!** THAT WAS **DAVE!** WILL WAS THE GUY I CHATTED WITH **BEFORE** DAVE! OR WAS THAT **HOLT?**


UM... FOUR,
AND... FOUR!
*GIGGLE!*


OH I THINK YOU'LL DO *JUST FINE* SATURDAY NIGHT, AS LONG AS YOU *REMEMBER* THAT YOU'RE OUT WITH JUST THE *ONE GUY!*
I'LL DO MY BEST! *GIGGLE!*

Saturday, late morning...

THIS WAS SO MUCH ***MORE*** THAN ONE OF YOUR ***USUAL*** POLITICAL MANEUVERS, HANK! ETHICS ASIDE, YOU'VE COME ***DANGEROUSLY*** CLOSE TO ***BREAKING*** THE ***LAW!***

THAT IN ***ITSELF*** MIGHT'VE JUST EARNED YOU A ***STERN SIDEWAYS SCOWL*** FROM ME, BUT ***YOU*** INVOLVED YOUR OWN ***NIECE...*** AND SOMEONE YOU'D ONLY ***KNOWN*** FOR A FEW ***DAYS!***

IF IT MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE, I ***DID*** HAVE *"ROBERT"* FULLY VETTED ***BEFORE*** I ORIGINALLY CONTACTED HIM!

*IT DOESN'T!*

ABBY, YOU ***KNOW*** THAT ***EVERYTHING*** I DID, ANYTHING I ***EVER*** DO, IS ***ALWAYS*** IN ***YOUR*** BEST INTEREST!

MY ***INITIAL*** PLAN WITH ROBERT WAS ***SUPPOSED*** TO BE ***SHORT TERM*** AND I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU ***ALL*** ABOUT IT AFTER THE FIRST FEW WEEKS!

BUT ***UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES*** POPPED UP, NOT THE ***LEAST*** OF WHICH WAS EVERYONE'S ***ATTACHMENT*** TO ***ROBIN*** AND HER ***SURPRISING*** DECISION TO ***FULLY*** TRANSITION!

AND WHEN ROBIN'S ***ACCIDENT*** HAPPENED AND THE EVIDENCE STARTED POINTING TO ***ROBERT*** AS HER ATTACKER, I HAD TO GO INTO FULL-BLOWN ***RECOVERY*** MODE TO ***SALVAGE*** EVERYTHING!

I ***JUST*** DID THE ***BEST*** I COULD GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES!

*SIGH!* I **KNOW** YOU DID, HANK! BUT THAT **STILL** LEAVES US WITH SEVERAL **SERIOUS** MESSES TO CLEAN UP!

UMM... EXCUSE ME?


ROBIN, DEAR! I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN!
YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE! I JUST DIDN'T THINK YOU'D FEEL COMFORTABLE WATCHING ME TEAR HANK A NEW ONE!
WELL, I WAS OUT FRONT WAITING FOR MY ÖBER AND YOUR WINDOW WAS OPEN AND I HEARD MY NAME BEING MENTIONED REPEATEDLY, SO I THOUGHT IT BEST TO BE PRESENT FOR A CONVERSATION THAT WAS OBVIOUSLY ABOUT ME!

I ***KNOW*** I'VE SAID THIS ***BEFORE,*** BUT I WANT TO REITERATE THAT ***EVERYTHING*** THAT I'VE DONE THESE PAST FEW MONTHS WAS ***MY DECISION*** AND MY DECISION ***ALONE!*** HANK DIDN'T ***FORCE*** OR TRY TO ***COERCE*** ME IN ***ANY WAY*** AT ALL!

I ***UNDERSTAND*** THAT, DEAR! BUT ***BECAUSE*** OF US, ***YOUR*** LIFE HAS UNDERGONE ***UNIMAGINABLE*** CHANGES! SO IT'S ***UP*** TO US TO PUT EVERYTHING ***RIGHT!***


ABBY, BECAUSE OF YOU, HANK AND NORA MY LIFE HAS BECOME MORE WONDERFUL THAN I EVER COULD'VE IMAGINED!
YOU'VE GIVEN ME A LIFE AND A FAMILY THAT I NEVER COULD'VE HAD! AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, NOTHING COULD BE MORE RIGHT!
OH, ROBIN! WE FEEL EXACTLY THE SAME WAY! ALL WE WANT TO DO NOW IS MAKE SURE NOTHING STANDS BETWEEN YOU AND THE LIFE YOU DESERVE!
AND ONE OF THOSE OBSTACLES IS "ROBERT"!


I THOUGHT "ROBERT" WAS HIDING OUT IN MEXICO AND WOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM ANYMORE!
I... I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT!
THE LAST THING I WANT IS TO CAUSE MORE TROUBLE FOR THE TWO OF YOU!
THAT'S WHAT WE HAVE TO FIX! AS LONG AS HE'S ON THE RUN THE POLICE WILL ASSUME HE'S THE ONE WHO TRIED TO ATTACK YOU AND STOP LOOKING FOR THE REAL CULPRIT!
ANOTHER THING TO CONSIDER IS IF YOU EVER DECIDED TO COME OUT ABOUT BEING A TRANSWOMAN! YOU WOULD EITHER NEED TO ADMIT TO BEING "ROBERT" OR WE WOULD HAVE TO ADJUST THE HISTORY HANK HAS ALREADY CREATED FOR YOU!

SO I THINK THE ***EASIEST*** OPTION IS FOR ME TO COME OUT ***NOW*** AND TELL EVERYONE, ***ESPECIALLY*** THE POLICE, ***WHO*** I ***USED*** TO BE!

IT'LL ***CLEAR*** "ROBERT" AND HELP ***YOU*** GET MORE SUPPORT FROM THE ***LGBTQ+*** COMMUNITY, WHICH WAS THE ***WHOLE POINT*** OF THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE!

I WHOLE-HEARTEDLY ***DISAGREE!***

ANY ADDITIONAL VOTES I ***MIGHT*** GARNER FROM THE ***GAY*** COMMUNITY WOULD MOST LIKELY BE ***OFFSET*** BY THE VOTES I'D ***LOSE*** FROM THE ***NARROW-MINDED*** COMMUNITY!

SO THE WHOLE *"DOING IT FOR ABBY'S CAMPAIGN"* JUSTIFICATION ***DOESN'T HOLD WATER!***

AND COMING OUT ***NOW*** WOULD THROW YOUR LIFE INTO ***TURMOIL!*** YOU'RE ***JUST NOW*** EMBARKING ON YOUR ***NEW LIFE!***

TAKE THE TIME TO ***BECOME*** WHO YOU ***WANT*** TO BE ***FIRST! THEN*** DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT THE ***REST*** OF THE WORLD TO KNOW!


BUT MY BACKGROUND, ROBIN'S BACKGROUND, ISN'T REAL! HANK MADE IT ALL UP! COULDN'T YOU GET IN TROUBLE IF THAT EVER BECOMES KNOWN?
FROM WHAT YOU TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR PREVIOUS LIVING ARRANGEMENT, YOUR RELOCATION AND NEW IDENTITY IS PERFECTLY LEGAL UNDER STATE DOMESTIC ABUSE LAWS!
I'LL JUST HAVE HANK GO BACK THROUGH EVERYTHING, FILL IN ANY MISSING PIECES AND MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS FLAGGED ACCORDINGLY!

WAIT! IT'S ALL LEGAL? YOU TOLD ME I WAS DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO BREAKING THE LAW!

AND I'D HAVE LET YOU KEEP THINKING SO AS LONG AS POSSIBLE JUST TO WATCH YOU SQUIRM!

BUT LUCKY FOR YOU, ROBIN FORCED MY HAND!

SO **WHAT** ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT "ROBERT"?

**"WE'RE"** NOT GOING TO DO **ANYTHING!** HANK AND I WILL FIGURE **SOMETHING** OUT! AND WHEN I SAY **HANK** AND **I**, I **REALLY** MEAN **HANK!**

CONSIDERING ALL THE POLITICAL **SCHEMES** AND **GAMES** HE'S PLAYED IN HIS CAREER, I'M **SURE** HE'LL BE ABLE TO FIGURE **SOMETHING** OUT! **RIGHT,** DEAR?

YES, DEAR!

NOW, UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, ***YOU*** HAVE A ***BIG DATE*** TONIGHT TO GET READY FOR!

SO I SUGGEST YOU CALL BACK YOUR ÖBER, GO FIND YOURSELF A ***FABULOUS*** OUTFIT, HIT THE SALON FOR THE ***PERFECT*** HAIR-DO, AND LET THAT YOUNG MAN SEE JUST HOW ***LUCKY*** HE ***REALLY*** IS!

THAT'S ALL ***YOU*** NEED TO DEAL WITH TODAY! THE ***REST*** IS UP TO ***US!*** OKAY?

OKAY!


YOU TWO ARE THE BEST! YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
THANK YOU, ABBY... HANK! I LOVE YOU BOTH!
WELL, YOU'RE HALF RIGHT, DEAR! NOW SCOOT! YOU CAN TELL ME ALL ABOUT YOUR DATE TOMORROW!
WE LOVE YOU, TOO, DEAR!

HALF RIGHT? REALLY?

*SIGH!* YES, DEAR!

OH, YOUR DOGHOUSE DAYS HAVE JUST BEGUN, HANK DEAR! SO GET USED TO IT!


Later that night, at Santini's...

About 30 minutes *after* 8 PM...

OF ***COURSE*** I'M EXCITED ABOUT IT! AND I'D ***LOVE*** TO HEAR ***ALL*** THE DETAILS, BUT I'M KIND OF ON A ***DATE*** RIGHT NOW!

***YES!*** FIRST THING IN THE MORNING! ***THANK YOU*** FOR UNDERSTANDING!

AT LEAST I *HOPE* I'M ON A DATE!

EITHER SHE'S JUST *FASHIONABLY LATE,* OR *I'VE* BEEN *STOOD UP!*

THE QUESTION IS, HOW *LONG* DO I WAIT UNTIL I'M SURE *WHICH* IT IS?

I'M **SORRY** I'M **SO LATE!** MY ÖBER TOOK **FOREVER** TO PICK ME UP!

I'M **SURE** IF HE'D **KNOWN** HOW YOU **LOOKED** TONIGHT HE'D HAVE DRIVEN THE **WRONG WAY** DOWN ONE-WAY STREETS TO GET TO YOU ON TIME!

WOW! I WAS HOPING HE'D LIKE THE WAY I LOOKED TONIGHT, BUT I HAD NO IDEA I'D FEEL SO FLUSTERED BY HIS COMMENT!

GOOD THING THE LIGHTS ARE LOW SO HE CAN'T SEE ME BLUSH!

OKAY, IF HE'S GOING TO KEEP DOING THAT, I'M GOING TO BE IN BIG TROUBLE!

IT WAS A GIRL, ACTUALLY! GOD, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE STILL HERE WAITING!

YOU WOULD NOT HAVE WAITED THAT LONG!

WELL, TO BE HONEST, I WAS ONLY GOING TO GIVE YOU UNTIL THE PLACE CLOSED... WHICH I THINK IS AROUND !! *CHUCKLE!*

MAYBE NOT! BUT NOW THAT I SEE YOU AGAIN I GUARANTEE THAT IN THE FUTURE I WILL WAIT AS LONG AS IS HUMANLY, OR INHUMANLY, POSSIBLE!

COMPLIMENTS LIKE **THAT** WILL **DEFINITELY** PUT YOU ON A GIRL'S GOOD SIDE!

*CUTE!* *GIGGLE!*

**HOW** COULD I GO **WRONG?** FROM **MY** PERSPECTIVE, YOU HAVE NO **BAD** SIDE! *CHUCKLE!*


SO, ROBIN SULLIVAN, I KNOW YOU'RE A THIRD YEAR LAW STUDENT! WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT YOU?
OH, SO YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME GO FIRST, HUH!
THAT'S THE PLAN! CONSIDER IT YOUR PENANCE FOR BEING LATE!
OKAY, FINE, MR. NIELSON! HAVE IT YOUR WAY!

CREATING "**MY**" HISTORY TO FILL OUT MEDICAL FORMS IS **ONE** THING, BUT THIS IS THE **FIRST** TIME I'VE REALLY HAD TO **TALK** TO ANYONE ABOUT IT! LET'S HOPE I DON'T **SCREW IT UP!**

WELL, I'M A **MIDWEST GIRL** FROM THE CHICAGO AREA... **ELGIN** TO BE MORE PRECISE! IT'S ABOUT AN HOUR **NORTHEAST** OF **THE LOOP!**

HAVING **ACTUALLY** GROWN UP AN HOUR **SOUTHWEST** OF THE LOOP IN **JOLIET,** I **STILL** KNOW **MORE** THAN ENOUGH ABOUT THE CHICAGO AREA TO AVOID BEING **CAUGHT** TRYING TO **FAKE** IT!

AND **BEFORE** YOU ASK, I'M **NOT** A BULLS, BEARS **OR** BLACKHAWKS FAN SINCE I'VE NEVER **REALLY** BEEN A **BIG** SPORTS FAN!

OH, YOU **MAY** DISCOVER **MORE THAN ONE** BEFORE THE NIGHT'S OVER! *GIGGLE!*

**DIAL IT BACK,** ROBIN! YOU DON'T WANT TO GIVE HIM **TOO** MANY IDEAS!

***GASP!*** I SPOKE **TOO SOON!** MAYBE YOU **DO** HAVE A **BAD SIDE** AFTER ALL! *CHUCKLE!*

I'M ***SO SORRY!*** THAT ***MUST*** HAVE BEEN ***TOUGH*** ON YOU AT THE TIME!

AS FOR ***FAMILY,*** I'M PRETTY MUCH ***ON MY OWN!*** I HAVE ***NO*** SIBLINGS AND MY ***FATHER*** DIED WHEN I WAS ABOUT TWO!

SO IT WAS JUST ***ME*** AND MY ***MOTHER*** UNTIL ***SHE*** PASSED AWAY A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WHILE I WAS A SOPHOMORE AT ***NORTHWESTERN!***

IT WAS, ***INITIALLY!*** BUT I GOT OVER IT! WE DIDN'T ***HAVE*** WHAT YOU'D CALL A ***TYPICAL*** MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP!

TO SAY THE ***LEAST!***

AND AFTER GRADUATING WITH A DEGREE IN ***POLITICAL SCIENCE,*** I GOT A ***SCHOLARSHIP*** TO COME OUT ***HERE*** AND STUDY ***LAW!***

WHICH, BARRING ALL THE ***BORING DETAILS,*** BRINGS US UP TO DATE!

I SOMEHOW ***DOUBT*** THE DETAILS OF ***YOUR*** LIFE HAVE BEEN BORING!

BORING ENOUGH TO LEAVE OUT OF ***TONIGHT'S*** CONVERSATION AT LEAST!

ARE YOU ***IMPLYING*** THERE COULD BE ***FUTURE*** DATES?

THAT ALL ***DEPENDS*** ON HOW ***YOUR*** STORY GOES! ***C'MON...*** IT'S ***YOUR*** TURN! ***GIVE IT UP!***

VERY WELL THEN!

WELL, UNLIKE **YOU,** I'M **NOT** A TRANSPLANT! I'M A BORN AND BRED **NORTHEASTERNER** FROM **CONNECTICUT,** THE YOUNGEST OF FOUR KIDS, TWO BROTHERS AND A SISTER WHO **TORMENTED** ME **MERCILESSLY** WHILE GROWING UP!

I **DOUBT** THEY DO **THAT** ANYMORE!

NOT SINCE I WAS TWELVE, WHEN I QUICKLY **OUTGREW** THEM **ALL!** THERE'S ALWAYS BEEN SOME TONGUE-IN-CHEEK **SPECULATION** THAT MY MOTHER HAD A **FLING** WITH A **NEW YORK GIANT** ABOUT NINE MONTHS **BEFORE** I WAS BORN!

I CAN SEE **WHY** SOMEONE WOULD THINK THAT! *GIGGLE!*

IT DIDN'T HELP TO ***DISSUADE*** THAT SPECULATION WHEN I ENROLLED AT ***UCONN*** TO STUDY PHYSICAL THERAPY AND ENDED UP ***PLAYING*** ON THEIR ***FOOTBALL*** TEAM!

SINCE PLAYING IN THE ***NFL*** WAS ***NEVER*** IN THE CARDS FOR ME, I DECIDED TO COME DOWN ***HERE*** AND GET MY ***MASTERS*** IN ***SPORTS MEDICINE*** TO HOPEFULLY BE A ***TRAINER*** INSTEAD!

WHICH, BARRING ALL ***MY*** BORING DETAILS, ***ONCE AGAIN*** BRINGS US UP TO DATE!

ARE YOU ***ACCUSING*** ME OF BEING ***LESS*** THAN TRUTHFUL?

IT ***MIGHT***...IF ***YOUR*** DETAILS WERE ***ACTUALLY*** AS BORING AS YOU'D HAVE ME BELIEVE!

LET'S JUST SAY YOU'RE ***LEAVING OUT*** SOME RATHER ***IMPORTANT*** DETAILS!

LIKE HOW YOU DIDN'T JUST ***PLAY*** FOOTBALL AT ***UCONN,*** YOU WERE THEIR ***STAR RUNNING BACK*** YOUR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS!

AND DESPITE TEARING YOUR ***ACL*** DURING A PLAYOFF GAME, THE ***REASON*** YOU WEREN'T DRAFTED INTO THE ***NFL,*** YOU ***STILL*** WERE AWARDED THE ***MVP*** YOUR SENIOR YEAR!


YOU HAD ME VETTED!
OF COURSE I DID! LIKE YOU SAID, IT'S WHAT ANY GOOD LAWYER WOULD DO! AND I PLAN ON BEING A VERY GOOD LAWYER!
OF THAT I HAVE NO DOUBT!


WELCOME TO SANTINI'S! CAN I GET YOU TWO SOMETHING FROM THE BAR?
I'LL HAVE WHATEVER HAZY IPA YOU HAVE ON TAP! AND THE LADY WILL HAVE...
VERY GOOD! WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE MENU?
A GLASS OF CHARDONNEY!


OH, I THINK WE'RE GOING TO *CHAT* FOR A WHILE BEFORE WE EVEN *THINK* ABOUT DINNER, IF *THAT'S* OKAY WITH YOU!
VERY GOOD, SIR!


UNLESS YOU'RE IN A HURRY TO EAT!
NO... I'M IN NO HURRY!


*SIGH!* NO HURRY WHATSOEVER!

Later, just after closing time...

I HOPE THE STAFF WASN'T ***TOO*** UPSET WITH US FOR ***STAYING*** SO LONG!

I COMPLETELY ***LOST TRACK*** OF TIME!

SO DID I! ***THAT'S*** WHY I HOPE THE ***TIP*** WAS ENOUGH TO SHOW OUR ***APPRECIATION*** FOR THEIR ***PATIENCE!***

***NEVER*** IN A ***MILLION YEARS*** DID I THINK I'D ENJOY JUST ***TALKING*** WITH SOMEONE FOR SO LONG!

***ESPECIALLY*** SOMEONE WHO ***LOOKS*** AT ME THE WAY ***HE*** DOES!

WHERE ARE YOU PARKED?

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A ***HARD*** TIME GETTING ONE AT ***THIS*** TIME OF NIGHT ON A ***SATURDAY!***

THINK YOU ***TRUST*** ME ***ENOUGH*** TO GIVE YOU A RIDE HOME?

***EXCELLENT!*** I'M PARKED ***JUST*** AROUND THE CORNER!

I'M ***NOT!*** I TOOK AN ***ÖBER*** HERE!

I TRUSTED YOU ENOUGH TO TRY THE ***CALAMARI FRITTI,*** SO I GUESS ACCEPTING A RIDE ***ISN'T*** OUT OF THE QUESTION!

I WAS ***HOPING*** HE'D ASK! I'M JUST ***NOT READY*** TO ***END*** THIS DATE YET!

I HAD A **WONDERFUL** TIME TONIGHT! I'M SO GLAD **YOU** ASKED **ME** OUT!

JUST **ANOTHER** ONE OF THOSE **SELF-ASSURED** MIDWESTERN GIRLS PUSHING US POOR **INNOCENT** EAST COAST BOYS AROUND!

AND **IT WORKED,** DIDN'T IT! GUESS WE EAST COAST BOYS **AREN'T** AS **GULLIBLE** AS WE APPEAR! *CHUCKLE!*

I GUESS I **DID,** DIDN'T I!

OH, **PLEASE!** YOU PRACTICALLY **DARED** ME TO ASK YOU OUT AFTER I **TURNED DOWN** YOUR INITIAL ATTEMPT!

I GUESS **NOT!** *GIGGLE!*

YOU'RE **NOT** GOING TO TRY TO TELL ME YOU'RE **MARRIED,** ARE YOU? **REMEMBER,** I HAD YOU **VETTED!** I KNOW **ALL** YOUR **DIRTY** LITTLE SECRETS!

**REALLY?** AND YOU'RE JUST **NOW** TELLING ME ABOUT IT?

WELL **NOW** I'M **INTRIGUED!**

YOU KNOW, NOW THAT OUR DATE IS ALMOST OVER, THERE'S **SOMETHING** I SHOULD TELL YOU!

I'M **SURE** YOU WOULD... **IF** I HAD ANY! NO, THIS IS SOMETHING THAT CAME UP **SUDDENLY** THIS EVENING!

TRUTHFULLY, I WANTED TO SEE **HOW** THE DATE WENT **FIRST!**

LITERALLY ***RIGHT BEFORE*** YOU ARRIVED I GOT A CALL FROM MY ***EX-COACH*** AT ***UCONN*** WHO NOW WORKS FOR THE ***PHOENIX CARDINALS!*** THEY'RE LOOKING FOR AN ***ASSISTANT TRAINING COACH*** AND HAVE ***ALL*** BUT ***OFFERED*** THE POSITION TO ***ME!***

THAT'S ***WONDERFUL!*** IT'S ***EXACTLY*** WHAT YOU WERE ***HOPING*** FOR!

***THAT'S JUST IT!*** HE SAID THEY'D WANT ME TO START BEFORE ***THIS*** SEASON'S PLAYOFFS... IN ***JUST*** A COUPLE OF ***WEEKS!***

SO DOES ***THAT*** MEAN YOU'D BE MOVING DOWN TO ***PHOENIX*** THIS ***NEXT*** SUMMER?


OH IT WOULD DEFINITELY SOUND VERY SKETCHY, IF YOU WERE THAT KIND OF PERSON... BUT WE BOTH KNOW YOU'RE NOT!
ACTUALLY IT WAS MY BOSS WHO HAD YOU VETTED! SHE'S VERY PROTECTIVE OF ME AND SHE HAS A VERY GOOD INVESTIGATOR!
I KNOW THIS ALL SOUNDS A LITTLE SKETCHY... LIKE A PLOY TO "ACCELERATE" OUR RELATIONSHIP, BUT I ASSURE YOU, IT ISN'T!
OKAY, JUST HOW THOROUGHLY DID YOU VET ME?
I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND! *CHUCKLE!*

SO WHY DID YOU *WAIT* TO TELL ME UNTIL *AFTER* YOU SAW HOW OUR DATE WENT?

*I* THOUGHT WE ESTABLISHED THAT *I* ASKED *YOU* OUT!

TRUTHFULLY, IF IT *HADN'T* GONE WELL, I PROBABLY *WOULDN'T* HAVE TOLD YOU SINCE WE MOST LIKELY *WOULDN'T* GO *OUT* AGAIN!

IN FACT, IF I'D KNOWN *EARLIER* THIS WEEK, I *PROBABLY* WOULDN'T HAVE ASKED YOU OUT IN THE *FIRST PLACE!*

AFTER I *INITIALLY* ASKED *YOU* OUT!

REGARDLESS, I'M **NOT** THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD ASK A WOMAN OUT **KNOWING** I'D BE **DISAPPEARING** FROM HER LIFE IN A FEW WEEKS!

I WOULD **NEVER** DO THAT! **ESPECIALLY** TO **YOU!**

I KNOW!

AND THAT **JUST** MAKES ME WANT TO SPEND **MORE** TIME WITH YOU WHILE I **CAN!**








SO, UMMM... YEAH! I'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW...AFTER I GET MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE JOB!
THEN WE'LL, UMMM... WE'LL...
RIGHT!
WE'LL GO FROM THERE!


NEEDLESS TO SAY, I HAD A REALLY GREAT TIME TONIGHT!
GOOD NIGHT, ROBIN!
I DID TOO!
GOOD NIGHT, ADAM!

Slam!

HOLY SHIT! WHO THE HELL WAS THAT GIRL? 'CAUSE I SURE AS HELL DIDN'T RECOGNIZE HER!

IT'S ALMOST AS IF A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON CAME HOME FROM THAT DATE!

WHEN I ***FIRST*** SHOWED UP TONIGHT I FIGURED MAYBE, JUST ***MAYBE*** I'D LET HIM ***KISS*** ME GOODNIGHT AT THE ***END*** OF THE DATE!

NOTHING ***COMMITTAL***, NOTHING ***STEAMY!*** JUST A TOKEN, AND POLITE, GOOD NIGHT KISS! ***JUST*** TO SEE WHAT IT'S ***LIKE!***

BUT SOMETHING ***CLICKED*** INSIDE ME WHILE WE WERE WALKING TO HIS CAR! SOMETHING I ***DIDN'T*** SEE COMING!

SOMETHING... ***UNRESTRAINED,*** AND MORE THAN A LITTLE ***EXHILARATING!***


GOD! THE CLOSEST THING I'VE EVER FELT TO IT WAS WHEN I USED TO WATCH PORN VIDEOS ON-LINE BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL!
BUT THIS IS ON A WHOLE OTHER LEVEL! AFFECTING PARTS OF MY BODY IN WAYS I NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE!
PARTS THAT ARE STILL CRYING OUT FOR ATTENTION!
ACHING TO BE TOUCHED, AND CARESSED, AND...

... AND...

OHH... WHERE THE *HELL* DID I PUT THAT THING?

PLEASE, ***PLEASE***, ***PLEASE*** TELL ME I ***DIDN'T*** THROW IT AWAY!

YES! THANK YOU, NORA!


OH... OH...
OH... GOD!!!

The next morning, bright and early...

OKAY, GIRLFRIEND, I NEED THE **DEETS**, THE **T**, **EVERYTHING!**

UMM... GOOD MORNING TO YOU, TOO, NORA!

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH... ***G'MORNING*** AND ALL THAT!

***HOW*** DID THE DATE GO? DID HE ***KISS*** YOU? YOU GONNA SEE HIM ***AGAIN?*** IS HE ***STILL HERE?***

***C'MON!*** NOSY AND INQUIRING MINDS ***WANT TO KNOW!***

*SIGH!* ***NO,*** HE IS ***NOT*** STILL HERE! I ***MAY*** SEE HIM AGAIN, AND, ***YES,*** THERE ***WAS KISSING*** INVOLVED!

SO ALL IN ALL, THE DATE WENT VERY, ***VERY WELL!***


THEN I WANT DETAILS, GIRLFRIEND! AND DON'T YOU DARE SCRIMP!

A little while later...

I AM SO ***PROUD*** OF YOU FOR TAKING THE ***INITIATIVE*** LIKE THAT!

*SNIFF!* MY LITTLE GIRL IS ***GROWING UP!*** *GIGGLE!*

WELL DON'T GIVE ME ***TOO*** MUCH CREDIT! KISSING HIM ***FIRST*** WAS MORE LIKE ME ***LOSING CONTROL*** THAN ANYTHING ELSE!

I ***JUST*** COULDN'T ***HELP*** MYSELF!

SO WHEN WILL YOU ***KNOW*** IF THIS NEW JOB OF HIS IS A ***DONE DEAL?***

YOU GOING TO SEE HIM AGAIN ***BEFORE*** THEN?

***"TALK"*** ABOUT, HUH! ***REALLY?***

OH, IT ***IS*** A DONE DEAL! HE ALREADY ***CALLED*** ME THIS MORNING AND SAID THEY'RE FLYING HIM OUT TO PHOENIX ***LATER*** THIS WEEK TO MEET THE TEAM, THE COACHES ***AND*** THE ***OWNERS!***

***HE*** WANTED TO, BUT ***I*** TOLD HIM WE SHOULD ***WAIT*** UNTIL HE GETS BACK SO WE'LL HAVE MORE TO TALK ABOUT!

HEY, YOU'RE ***PREACHING*** TO THE ***CHOIR*** HERE, DARLIN'!

BUT IF YOU'RE SO ***FIRED UP*** TO GO TO THE NEXT LEVEL, ***WHY*** PUT IT ***OFF?***

***NEWS ALERT!*** A ***LOT*** OF GUYS ***LIVE*** FOR "DEFLOWERING" VIRGINS!

OKAY, ***FINE!*** I GOT A LITTLE ***TASTE*** OF PHYSICAL ***INTIMACY*** THE OTHER NIGHT AND WANT ***MORE!*** IS THERE ANYTHING ***WRONG*** WITH THAT?

BECAUSE, WELL... ***BECAUSE*** I'M A ***VIRGIN*** OBVIOUSLY!

UMMM... ***I*** DON'T ***HAVE*** A "CHERRY" TO POP! BUT THAT'S ***NOT*** WHAT I'M ***TALKING*** ABOUT!


SO YOU FINALLY TOOK IT OUT OF THE BOX?
'BOUT DAMN TIME!
I REALLY WANT TO GIVE ADAM SOMETHING TO REMEMBER ME BY BEFORE HE MOVES AWAY!
BUT MY ONLY SEXUAL EXPERIENCE SINCE THAT DISASTROUS INCIDENT IN HIGH SCHOOL IS, WELL... WITH THAT TOY YOU GAVE ME A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO!
UMM, YEAH! LAST NIGHT!

BUT I CAN'T **BELIEVE** YOU DON'T THINK HE'LL REMEMBER **YOU!** I MEAN, HAVE YOU LOOKED IN A **MIRROR** LATELY? **YOWZA,** GIRLIE!

HE DIDN'T ACTUALLY **TELL** YOU THAT, DID HE?

IT'S NOT **JUST** ABOUT **LOOKS!** HELL, HE'S BEEN A **JOCK** SINCE **HIGH SCHOOL!** HE'S DATED AND **SCREWED** NOTHING BUT **CHEERLEADERS** HIS WHOLE **POST-ADOLESCENT** LIFE!

NO! BUT THE BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION ABBY HAD DONE ON HIM WAS **VERY THOROUGH!**

HE'S BEEN WITH **GYMNASTS,** NORA! **GYMNASTS!** HOW THE **HELL** CAN **I** COMPETE WITH **THAT?**

I HAVE TO BE ***HONEST*** HERE, HONEY! IF YOU'RE ***HOPING*** TO GIVE HIM A RIDE ***COMPARABLE*** TO SOME NUBILE ***CONTORTIONIST*** WHO'S GOT A GOOD ***SIX YEARS*** OF ***EXPERIENCE*** UNDER HER PANTIES, THEN ***YOU'RE*** BEING ***UNREALISTIC!*** ***ESPECIALLY*** IN THE TIME FRAME YOU'VE GOT ***LEFT*** WITH HIM!

AND YOU THINK PUTTING HIM OFF FOR A FEW ***DAYS*** WILL CHANGE THAT?

IT MAY BE ***SATISFYING,*** BUT YOU ***WON'T*** LEARN MUCH ***STYLE*** PRACTICING WITH YOUR NEW ***TOY!***

*SIGH!* I'M ***PAINFULLY*** AWARE OF THAT! I JUST ***DON'T*** WANT HIM TO BE ***DISAPPOINTED*** BY MY ***IN***EXPERIENCE! SOMETHING HE'S ***BOUND*** TO NOTICE!

ACTUALLY, THAT'S ***NOT*** WHAT I HAD IN MIND!


THEN WHAT **DID** YOU HAVE IN MIND? 'CAUSE REALLY THE **ONLY** WAY TO **CONVINCE** A GUY YOU'VE GOT **EXPERIENCE,** IS TO GO OUT AND...


OH!

OKAY, LET ME ***FIRST*** SAY I HAVE ***NO*** QUALMS AT ***ALL*** ABOUT MEANINGLESS ***HOOK-UPS!*** IN FACT, I'M A ***HUGE FAN!*** I ***LOVE*** THE ***FREEDOM,*** THE ***VARIETY,*** AND, WELL, THE ***SEX!***

BUT AT THE SAME TIME I **DON'T** WANT **YOU** TO **JUMP** INTO SOMETHING YOU'RE **NOT READY** FOR **JUST** TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION ON A GUY YOU **JUST MET** AND ONLY **GOING** TO KNOW FOR A COUPLE OF **WEEKS!**

THE THING IS, NORA, I **AM** READY! I'VE BEEN **THINKING** ABOUT THIS SINCE ABBY'S **PARTY** THE OTHER NIGHT! I'VE ACTUALLY **IMAGINED** WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO HAVE SEX WITH **EACH** OF THE GUYS I FLIRTED WITH THAT NIGHT!

**REALLY?** WHY YOU **HORNY** LITTLE **MINX** YOU!

AND IN EACH **IMAGINED** SCENARIO, **I** DIDN'T REALLY **CARE** IF **THEY** GOT OFF OR NOT! IT WAS **ALL ABOUT ME!**

**GOOD FOR YOU!**

GIRLFRIEND, SAY THE **WORD** AND WE ARE **THERE** FOR YOU! **ANYTIME, ANYPLACE!**

BUT OF COURSE SINCE I'M STILL **NEW** TO THIS, I'LL NEED THE **SUPPORT** OF MY **BESTIES** TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

SO, YOU THINK **YOU** AND THE **GIRLS** CAN BE MY **"WINGMEN"** A FEW NIGHTS THIS WEEK?

THANK YOU **SO** MUCH, NORA! ADAM DOESN'T GET BACK UNTIL **SATURDAY,** SO THAT'LL GIVE ME A FEW DAYS OF **"PRACTICE"!** *GIGGLE!*


A few nights later
at a familiar club...


LOOKIN' GOOD OUT THERE TONIGHT!
OH YEAH! ALWAYS A GOOD CROWD ON WEDNESDAYS!
THEN WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? C'MON, ROBIN! THIS IS YOUR NIGHT!


I'M COMING! I'M COMING!
DON'T WORRY! THEY SMELLED FRESH MEAT AND TOOK OFF ALREADY!


DO YOU THINK I'M CRAZY FOR DOING THIS?
CRAZY? NEVER! UNORTHODOX? A LITTLE!
BUT THAT'S BEEN THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE THESE LAST FEW MONTHS, SO I SAY GO WITH WHAT WORKS FOR YOU!
AND FOR WHAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH, I CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER WAY TO GET IT DONE!

AND, AS ***LUCK*** WOULD HAVE IT, I SEE A ***PERFECT*** CANDIDATE FOR YOU!

SEE THE ***HUNKY*** GUY AT THE BAR? RED SHIRT, NURSING A BEER?

BECAUSE HE'S A ***REGULAR!*** HIS NAME'S ***ZACH!*** HE'S NOT ***ONLY*** A NICE GUY, BUT HE'S ALSO ***GREAT*** IN THE ***SACK!***

YOU DO? ***WHERE?***

UMMM... YEAH! WHY DOES HE LOOK ***SO FAMILIAR?***


WAIT A MINUTE! YOU'VE HAD SEX WITH HIM?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
SURE! I THINK ALL THREE OF US HAVE! LIKE I SAID, HE'S A REGULAR... JUST LIKE WE ARE!
IT MEANS THAT ALTHOUGH THE HUNT FOR NEW BLOOD IS ALWAYS EXCITING, IT CAN ALSO BE A LITTLE SKETCHY!
SO HAVING A GROUP OF "REGULARS" TO FALL BACK ON IS A WAY TO PLAY IT SAFE!

SAFE, **CLEAN** AND DEFINITELY **WORTH IT!**

SO I SUGGEST YOU GO MAKE YOUR MOVE **BEFORE** SOME **SLUT** TRIES TO PUT HER **CLAWS** IN HIM!

AND TRUST ME, THE WAY **YOU** LOOK TONIGHT, YOU WON'T HAVE **ANY PROBLEM** AT ALL!

SO ZACH IS **"SAFE"**, HUH?


OKAY! HERE I GO!
HAVE FUN! YOU CAN TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT TOMORROW! *GIGGLE!*




HI! I'M ROBIN! WANNA DANCE?
WITH YOU? MORE THAN ANYTHING!
GOOD ANSWER! *GIGGLE!*








WANNA GET OUTTA HERE?
GOOD ANSWER! *CHUCKLE!*
WITH YOU? MORE THAN ANYTHING!
OKAY... I'M COMMITTED NOW!


A short time later...

OH... **GOD!** HAVING SOMEONE **ELSE'S** HANDS **TOUCH** ME THIS WAY IS **SO** FUCKING **INTENSE!**

CAN'T EVEN **IMAGINE** WHAT IT'LL FEEL LIKE WHEN HE'S **INSIDE ME!**


THIS IS IT! THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW!
BUT GOING BACK IS THE FURTHEST THING FROM MY MIND RIGHT NOW!
BECAUSE I WANT THIS! I WANT THIS NOW!


THE FIRST COCK I'VE EVER TOUCHED OTHER THAN MY OWN! AND IT'S SO MUCH BIGGER!
AND ANY SECOND, IT'S GOING TO BE...


*GASP!*
OH... GOD!!


OH! OH... GOD! THAT FEELS SO... SO...


OOOOHHHH!!


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
*SIGH!* I'M... WONDERFUL!


YOU... YOU DIDN'T FINISH, DID YOU?
NO... NO I DIDN'T!


GOOD!

The next day...

I KNOW I HAVE **NOTHING** TO COMPARE HIM TO, BUT...**JESUS,** NORA! HE WAS **INCREDIBLE!**

I JUST HOPE **I** DIDN'T **DISAPPOINT** HIM!

BECAUSE I CAME SO **FAST** AND SO **HARD** THE FIRST TIME THAT I ALMOST **PASSED OUT!**

I... STOPPED COUNTING AFTER THE **THIRD!**

**WHY** WOULD YOU SAY **THAT?**

THE "**FIRST** TIME", HUH? JUST HOW **MANY** TIMES **WERE** THERE?

SO YOU **DIDN'T** PASS OUT AND YOU ORGASMED AT LEAST **THREE** TIMES!

**TRUST ME,** DARLIN', HE WAS **NOT** DISAPPOINTED!

MAYBE SO, BUT I SERIOUSLY **DOUBT** IT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH **MY** SEXUAL SKILLS!

**I** DID LITTLE MORE THAN **LIE THERE** AND **MOAN** THE WHOLE TIME!

BUT THAT'S **NOT** WHAT I WANT TO GIVE **ADAM!**

HEY, FOR **SOME** GUYS THAT'S **ALL** IT TAKES! AND ALL THEY **WANT!**

I **KNOW** THAT, HONEY! SO, ARE **WE** GOING **OUT** AGAIN TONIGHT?

ACTUALLY, SINCE I ONLY HAVE A **COUPLE** OF DAYS TO WORK WITH, I WANTED TO TRY A **SOLO** OUTING TONIGHT!

DON'T WORRY! I HAVE OUR INVESTIGATOR, **SKIP,** DOING A CURSORY **BACKGROUND CHECK** INTO THE FOUR GUYS I MET AT THE **PARTY** THE OTHER NIGHT!

AFTER I GET THE RESULTS, I'LL PICK **ONE** AND SET UP A NICE, QUIET ONE-TO-ONE **DATE** IN A PUBLIC PLACE!

*EXACTLY!*
**GIGGLE!**

YOU'RE **NOT** GOING TO THE CLUB **ALONE!**
**NO WAY!**

THAT YOU **HOPE** ENDS UP AS A **BOOTY CALL!**

NOW THAT I ***KNOW*** WHAT TO EXPECT, I'M HOPING I CAN STAY ***COHERENT*** ENOUGH TO BE MORE OF AN ***ACTIVE*** PARTICIPANT!

***MAYBE!*** BUT JUST IN CASE, I THINK I'LL SPEND AN HOUR OR TWO THIS AFTERNOON WATCHING SOME ON-LINE ***PORN!*** *GIGGLE!*

I'M ***SURE*** YOU'LL DO JUST ***FINE,***

NEVER HURTS TO LEARN FROM ***PROFESSIONALS!*** *GIGGLE!*

I'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW AND LET YOU KNOW HOW IT GOES!

I *WILL!* BYE, NORA!

JUST BE YOUR *FABULOUS* SELF AND *HAVE FUN,* BABE!


SHE THINKS I WAS KIDDING ABOUT THE PORN!
NOW, WHERE THE HELL IS THAT LINK?


Later in the evening...


WHY, THANK YOU, SIR!
MY PLEASURE!


IS THIS TABLE OKAY?
IT'S PERFECT!


YOU KNOW, I'M SORRY I DIDN'T CALL YOU AFTER MEETING YOU THE OTHER NIGHT!
I WAS PLANNING TO, BUT YOU JUST BEAT ME TO IT!
OH I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A FIRM BELIEVER IN ACTING ON ONE'S IMPULSES! *CHUCKLE!*
IF ANYONE SHOULD APOLOGIZE IT'S ME FOR JUMPING THE GUN THE WAY I DID!
I'M AFRAID I'VE ALWAYS HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE WHEN IT COMES TO IMPULSE CONTROL!


THST'S GOOD TO KNOW! *GIGGLE!*
IT'S ALSO GOOD TO KNOW THAT YOU HAVE A FAIRLY SERIOUS GIRLFRIEND YOU REGULARLY CHEAT ON!
WHICH IS THE REAL REASON YOU DIDN'T CALL THIS WEEK AND WON'T AGAIN AFTER TONIGHT... JUST THE WAY I WANT IT!

Later in the evening...

WOULD YOU LIKE ANOTHER DRINK?

NO, THANK YOU! ACTUALLY, I THINK *I'M* READY TO *LEAVE!*


OH! YOU WANT TO GO HOME?

GOING **HOME** IS THE **FURTHEST** THING FROM **MY** MIND RIGHT NOW!


THEN, BY ALL MEANS, LET'S MOVE THIS DATE TO AN ALTERNATE LOCATION!


HOW CONVENIENT!
AND, AS IT SO HAPPENS, MY PLACE IS JUST A COUPLE OF BLOCKS AWAY!


AND NOT AT ALL SURPRISING SINCE THAT'S WHY I PICKED THIS PLACE TO MEET!
QUICK AND EASY ACCESS TO HIS PLACE!

SO WE CAN GET RIGHT DOWN TO WHAT I ***REALLY*** CAME HERE FOR TONIGHT!


OH! OH GOD! YES!


OH, FUCK! THIS GUY HAS MOVES ZACH NEVER SHOWED ME!
AND, OOOHHHH... THEY'RE ALL AMAZING!


OH... OH...
OH FUCK!!


OKAY, BABY! LET'S TRY IT MY WAY FOR A BIT!
OH, I'M GAME!


THIS SEEMED TO BE A RECURRING AND FAVORED POSITION IN THE VIDEOS!
OH, YEAH! RIDE 'EM, COWGIRL!


OOHH, YES! AND IT JUST BECAME ONE OF MINE!

Saturday night...

I'M SURPRISED YOU'RE NOT MORE **EXCITED** ABOUT YOUR **NEW JOB** WITH THE **CARDINALS!**

I REALLY HAVEN'T HAD **TIME** TO LET IT SINK IN YET! EVER SINCE THEY **OFFICIALLY** OFFERED ME THE JOB EARLIER THIS WEEK, THEY'VE KEPT ME **INSANELY** BUSY WITH **PAPERWORK** AND **MEETINGS!**

AND SINCE THEY WANT ME TO REPORT TO WORK ON **MONDAY,** I'VE BEEN KNOCKING MYSELF OUT TYING UP **LOOSE ENDS** HERE!

Cafe parisien


NOT THAT I WOULD EVER THINK OF YOU AS A LOOSE END!
OH, I KNOW! IT'S LIKE WE TALKED ABOUT THE OTHER NIGHT! WITH YOU STARTING A NEW CAREER AND ME HALF WAY THROUGH LAW SCHOOL, NEITHER ONE OF US IS IN A POSITION TO START A NEW RELATIONSHIP!
SO WE JUST ENJOY EACH OTHER'S COMPANY WHILE WE CAN!

I'LL TAKE YOU AT YOUR WORD, COUNSELOR! *CHUCKLE!*

BESIDES, I LOOKED IT UP, AND THE OFFICIAL ***MINIMUM*** NUMBER OF DATES REQUIRED TO BE CONSIDERED A *"LOOSE END"* IS ***THREE!*** SO WE'RE GOOD! *GIGGLE!*

As dinner winds down...

I WAS ***HOPING*** THAT COMPLETING MY ***MASTERS*** WOULD GIVE ME AN ***EXCUSE*** TO TAKE SOME TIME ***OFF*** AND COME BACK UP ***HERE*** OCCASIONALLY!

VERY MUCH SO! BUT ***UNFORTUNATELY,*** AND WITHOUT ***MY*** KNOWLEDGE, THE ***CARDINALS*** ORGANIZATION WORKED OUT A DEAL WITH ***ASU*** TO TRANSFER ***ALL*** MY CREDITS DOWN ***THERE!***

TO BE FAIR, ***THEY*** THOUGHT THEY WERE DOING ME A ***FAVOR,*** SINCE, EVEN IN THE ***OFF***-SEASON, THERE'S A ***LOT*** OF WORK TO DO!

***THAT*** WOULD'VE BEEN ***NICE!***

THEY JUST WANTED TO KEEP YOU ***CLOSE!*** I KIND OF ***KNOW*** HOW THEY FEEL!


*SIGH!* HERE'S TO WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN!
TO WHAT COULD'VE BEEN!

Clink

AND TO WHAT HOPEFULLY WILL BE LATER TONIGHT!


WE'VE ARRIVED AT YOUR DESTINATION, M'LADY!
THANK YOU, SIR!


THANK YOU
VERY MUCH!



I THINK WE'D BE MUCH MORE ***COMFORTABLE*** CONTINUING THIS ***INSIDE!***

ARE YOU ***SURE*** THAT'S SUCH A ***GOOD*** IDEA?

IT IS... UNLESS YOU DON'T ***MIND*** THE NEIGHBORS CALLING THE ***POLICE*** ON US! *GIGGLE!*


THEN WHO AM I TO INITIATE A NEIGHBORHOOD SCANDAL? *CHUCKLE!*














TIRED YET?
NOT IN THE SLIGHTEST!
GOOD!


BECAUSE I WANT OUR LAST NIGHT TO BE MEMORABLE!
IT ALREADY IS! TRUST ME!





Eventually...

MMMMMM! I HOPE YOU'RE NOT IN A HURRY TO **GO** ANYWHERE, BECAUSE I DON'T THINK I CAN **MOVE** FROM THIS SPOT!

I CAN'T THINK OF **ANYPLACE** I'D **RATHER** BE!

I KNOW YOU HAVE A **LOT** TO DO TOMORROW, SO IF YOU **CAN'T** STAY THE NIGHT, I'LL UNDERSTAND!

BUT COULD YOU AT LEAST **HOLD ME** UNTIL I FALL ASLEEP?

***NOTHING*** WOULD MAKE ME ***HAPPIER!***

*SIGH!*

WELL... MAYBE ***ONE*** THING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER!

The next morning...

*YAWN!*






Robin




Robin


Robin



# A Miss-Judgement

## Part Four

by C. Black

For the next few months, Robin's focus is primarily on her classes...

All her studies...


And work...

Which causes some concern from her friends...

LOOK, I **KNOW** LAW SCHOOL IS **IMPORTANT** TO YOU, BUT YOU'VE BEEN HITTING IT **PRETTY DAMN HARD** THESE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS!

WE HARDLY **SEE** YOU ANYMORE! WE WOULDN'T BE HAVING **THIS** CONVERSATION IF **I** HADN'T **AMBUSHED** YOU TODAY!

I KNOW, AND **I'M SORRY** ABOUT THAT, NORA! IT'S JUST THAT WITH **THIRD YEAR** WINDING DOWN, I'M SEEING THE **LIGHT** AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL!

AND I **DON'T** WANT TO **BLOW IT!**

I *GET* THAT, BUT I CAN'T *HELP* BUT NOTICE THAT THIS EXCESSIVE, *TYPE A* DEVOTION TO YOUR STUDIES BEGAN SHORTLY AFTER *ADAM* LEFT TOWN!

YOU THINK *THAT* MIGHT HAVE HAD *SOMETHING* TO DO WITH IT?

I DON'T KNOW! *MAYBE!* ALL I *DO* KNOW IS MY *GRADES* TOOK A SIGNIFICANT *DIP* RIGHT AFTER HE LEFT!

BUT, THEN AGAIN, IT *COULD* JUST BE A *COINCIDENCE!* AFTER ALL, IT WAS ONLY *TWO* DATES!

OH HONEY, I **SAW** THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE AFTER THAT **FIRST** DATE! AND NO MATTER HOW **HARD** YOU TRY TO **DENY** IT, YOU HAD IT **BAD** FOR THE GUY!

WHY **ELSE** WOULD YOU GO THROUGH **EVERYTHING** YOU DID TO GET READY FOR YOUR **SECOND** DATE?

AND I'M **SURE** HE DOES! THE QUESTION IS, JUST HOW "FOND" ARE **YOUR** MEMORIES OF **HIM?**

I... I **JUST** WANTED IT TO BE **SPECIAL** BECAUSE I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO BE OUR **LAST** DATE! I WANTED HIM TO HAVE **FOND** MEMORIES OF ME!

*SIGH!* A LOT **MORE** THAN I **EXPECTED** THEM TO BE!

AND THAT **SURPRISES** YOU? I KNOW YOU'RE **RELUCTANT** TO USE THE "L" WORD, BUT **FACE FACTS,** SWEETIE, EVEN THOUGH YOUR RELATIONSHIP WAS EXTREMELY **SHORT-LIVED,** ADAM WAS ESSENTIALLY YOUR **FIRST LOVE!** AND A GIRL **DOESN'T** GET **OVER** THAT VERY EASILY!

I **DO!**

YOU **REALLY** THINK **THAT'S** WHY I'VE **SEQUESTERED** MYSELF AWAY ALL THIS TIME?


BUT IT'S BEEN OVER THREE MONTHS! TIME TO SUCK IT UP AND RE-ENTER THE WORLD!
NOW I'M NOT SAYING YOU NEED TO DIVE BACK INTO THE DATING POOL, BUT A LITTLE SOCIALIZATION WOULD DO YOU GOOD!
AND BESIDES, YOUR FRIENDS MISS YOU!
MOST DEFINITELY!
THEY DO, HUH?


THAT'S WHY WE'VE PLANNED A GIRL'S NIGHT OUT THIS SATURDAY THAT, IF NECESSARY, DOES INVOLVE A KIDNAPPING!
YOU'RE DAMN STRAIGHT WE WOULD!
YOU'D REALLY DO THAT, WOULDN'T YOU?


SMART DECISION, GIRLFRIEND!
OH, YOU DIDN'T! *GIGGLE!*
OKAY, OKAY, I'M IN! I KNOW WHEN I'M BEATEN!
IT'S NOT LIKE I HAD A CHOICE! *GIGGLE!*

That Saturday night...

YOU'RE **NOT** CALLING IT **QUITS** ALREADY ARE YOU? IT'S STILL **EARLY!**

WELL, I **GUESS** THAT'S OKAY! AS LONG AS YOU **PROMISE** NOT TO STAY OFF THE DANCE FLOOR **TOO** LONG!

**RELAX!** I'M **JUST** TAKING A **BREATHER!** REMEMBER, **I'M** OUT OF **PRACTICE!**

I **PROMISE!** IN THE MEANTIME, YOU'VE STILL GOT **LIZ** OUT THERE DANCING UP A STORM AND **DESI...**

THE LAST *I* SAW OF HER SHE WAS UP AT THE BAR ***FLIRTING*** WITH SOME GUY!

SHE WOULDN'T LEAVE WITHOUT ***TELLING*** US, SO I'M ***SURE*** SHE'S STILL AROUND HERE ***SOMEWHERE!***

CONSIDERING THE "BUNCH", THAT'S ***NOT*** SAYING A ***LOT!*** *GIGGLE!*

ACTUALLY, I HAVEN'T ***SEEN*** DESI FOR AWHILE!

TRUE! SHE ***IS*** THE ***RESPONSIBLE*** ONE OF THE BUNCH!

*GIGGLE!*


WELL, DON'T TAKE TOO LONG! IT'S NOT THE SAME IF YOU'RE NOT OUT THERE WITH US!
JUST A FEW MINUTES OF DOWNTIME! THAT'S ALL I NEED!

AS USUAL, NORA WAS ***RIGHT!*** IT ***DOES*** FEEL GOOD TO GET BACK OUT WITH MY ***FRIENDS*** AGAIN!

I ***REALLY*** DON'T KNOW ***WHAT*** I'D DO ***WITHOUT*** HER... OR THE ***OTHERS!*** AND I HOPE TO GOD I ***NEVER*** HAVE TO FIND OUT!

***WHOOPS!*** SHORRY 'BOUT THAT!

Crash!

UH-OH! I THINK I FOUND DESI! AND IT SOUNDS LIKE SHE'S HAD A LITTLE TOO MUCH FUN FOR ONE NIGHT!

I'M SURPRISED BECAUSE SHE'S USUALLY PRETTY GOOD AT KNOWING HER LIMIT!

WHOA! I THINK I'M PRETTY WASTED! *GIGGLE!*

NOT A PROBLEM, GORGEOUS!

OH GREAT! SLEAZY PREDATOR AT 6 O'CLOCK! WELL, I'LL JUST HAVE TO...

'CAUSE I'M GONNA TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF YOU!

*GASP!*

THAT... THAT VOICE! I KNOW THAT VOICE!


I'M GONNA TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF YOU!


OOHHH!
I THINK I SHOULD GO HOME!
DON'T WORRY, BEAUTIFUL! I'LL GET YOU THERE SAFE AND SOUND! MY CAR'S RIGHT OUTSIDE!


OH, THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL SHE'S GOING ANYWHERE WITH YOU!

THERE YOU ARE, DESI! WE'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!

I DON FEEL SO GOOD, ROBIN! THINK... THINK I DRANK TOO MUCH!

I KNOW, HONEY! DON'T YOU WORRY! WE'LL GET YOU HOME!

YEAH, I WAS JUST ABOUT TO GIVE HER A RIDE HOME!

OH, THAT'S VERY,,, SWEET OF YOU! BUT WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HER!


YOU COULD **REALLY** GIVE ALL **FOUR** OF US A RIDE HOME? THAT'D BE **GREAT!**
ARE YOU **SURE?** IT'S REALLY **NO PROBLEM** WHATSOEVER!
ALL **FOUR** OF YOU? UMM... ON **SECOND** THOUGHT, I DON'T THINK MY CAR'S GOT ENOUGH **ROOM!**


EVERYTHING OKAY BACK HERE?
YEAH! DESI'S NOT FEELING TOO WELL SO I THINK WE'D BETTER GET HER HOME!


'KAY!
NO PROBLEM! C'MON, HONEY!
LIZ, CAN YOU GET HER SOME AIR? WE'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
I WANT TO TAKE CARE OF SOMETHING FIRST!


WHO?
WHAT THE FUCK?! SOMEONE DRUGGED DESI?
HMPH! I HAD A FEELING HE'D DISAPPEAR!
THE SCUMBAG WHO DRUGGED DESI!

NOT JUST ***SOMEONE!*** I'M **98% *SURE*** IT WAS THE SAME ***PIECE OF SHIT*** WHO DRUGGED ***ME!***

HIS ***VOICE!*** I'D ***RECOGNIZE*** THAT SLIMY DRAWL ***ANYWHERE!***

AND NOW THAT I'VE SEEN THE ***FACE*** THAT GOES ***WITH*** THE VOICE, THAT ***DOUCHEBAG*** IS ***TOAST!***

OH, I KNOW!

***WHAT?!*** BUT I THOUGHT YOU ***NEVER*** SAW HIS ***FACE!*** HOW DO YOU ***KNOW*** IT WAS ***HIM?***

BUT THE ***POLICE*** WILL NEED A LOT ***MORE*** THAN ***YOUR*** DRUGGED UP MEMORY TO ARREST HIM!


BUT I'M SURE THAT BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WE'LL FIND A WAY TO BRING HIM DOWN!

The next day...

100% CERTAINTY ON MY PART THAT THIS IS THE SAME GUY!

AND I WON'T HAVE THAT UNTIL WE HAVE THIS DRINK ANALYZED AND DISCOVER IT'S THE SAME SHIT HE USED ON ME!

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT! YOU'RE SURE THIS IS THE SAME GUY WHO TRIED TO RAPE YOU, BUT YOU HAVEN'T REPORTED HIM TO THE POLICE YET!

WHAT AM I MISSING HERE?


SO WHY NOT HAVE THE POLICE ANALYZE IT?
FOR THE SAME REASON WE'RE TALKING TO YOU WHEN ABBY'S NOT AROUND!
ONCE I'M CONVINCED, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THAT THIS IS THE GUY, THERE'S NOTHING I WON'T DO, LEGAL OR NOT, TO GET HIS SORRY ASS THROWN IN JAIL!
AND I DON'T WANT ANY OF THAT TO TAINT ABBY'S REPUTATION OR HER CHANCES AT BECOMING ELECTED!

I ***UNDERSTAND*** AND ***DEEPLY*** APPRECIATE THAT, ROBIN! BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR ***INTERVENTION*** LAST NIGHT MAY HAVE ***SCARED*** HIM OFF!

***HOW*** ARE YOU GOING TO ***FIND*** HIM AGAIN?

I ***RECOGNIZED*** HIM FROM ONE OF MY ***CLASSES!*** SO EVEN THOUGH I DON'T KNOW HIS NAME... ***YET,*** I ***DO*** KNOW ***EXACTLY*** WHERE HE'LL BE FROM ***NINE TO ELEVEN THIRTY*** EVERY ***MONDAY*** THROUGH ***THURSDAY*** FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS!

WHICH GIVES ME AMPLE ***TIME*** AND ***OPPORTUNITY*** TO DETERMINE THE ***BEST WAY*** TO DEAL WITH HIM!


SO WHAT'S *YOUR* PART IN ALL THIS?
BACKUP, *SAGE* ADVICE, GETAWAY DRIVER... WHATEVER IT IS THE *SPUNKY SIDEKICK* ALWAYS DOES!
*GIGGLE!*


AFRAID NOT!
WELL, I WON'T GET THE RESULTS BACK ON THIS FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS! BUT I DON'T SUPPOSE THAT'LL KEEP YOU TWO FROM INITIATING WHATEVER IT IS YOU'VE GOT PLANNED!
DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD!
NOPE!


WHATEVER YOU TWO DECIDE TO DO, PLEASE BE CAREFUL!
YOUR AUNT WOULD HAVE MY HIDE IF I WERE TO LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO EITHER OF YOU!
WE KNOW, UNCLE HANK! WE KNOW!

I ***KNOW*** I'VE SAID THIS ***BEFORE,*** ROBIN, BUT ***WE ARE FAMILY!*** AND AS ***NORA*** KNOWS, THERE'S ***NOTHING*** ABBY AND I ***WON'T*** DO FOR ***FAMILY!***

***ALWAYS*** REMEMBER THAT!

*SNIFF!* I ***WILL!*** AND THANK YOU ***SOO*** MUCH...

... UNCLE HANK!

A few days later...

RONNY! WILL YOU JUST FUCKIN' STOP, MAN? WE'VE GOTTA TALK TO YOU ABOUT THIS!

TALK? THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL IT? ALL I'VE HEARD FROM YOU TWO IS WHINING LIKE THE LITTLE BITCHES YOU ARE!


DUDE! I SAID STOP!
IF I HAVE TO!
WHAT? YOU GONNA DECK ME RIGHT HERE IN THE HALLS OF THE LAW SCHOOL?

TRUE! BUT ***YOU'VE*** GOT ***MORE*** FUCK UPS THAN ***ANY*** OF US!

YOU'RE GETTING ***SLOPPY,*** MAN! AND IF YOU'RE NOT ***CAREFUL,*** YOU'RE GONNA BRING US ***ALL*** DOWN ***WITH*** YOU!

OKAY, ***FINE!*** I DON'T SEE WHAT THE ***BIG DEAL*** IS! I ***STRUCK OUT*** THE OTHER NIGHT AT SHENANIGANS! ***SO WHAT?*** IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S THE ***FIRST*** TIME... FOR ***ANY*** OF US!

HEY! ***YOU*** FUCKERS WERE THERE, TOO! ***YOU*** DIDN'T KNOW SHE HAD FRIENDS THERE ***EITHER!*** ***RIGHT?***

THAT'S **NOT** THE POINT! IF A FRIEND, BARTENDER, OR **ANYONE** GETS INVOLVED, YOU **GIVE HER UP** AND DISAPPEAR **IMMEDIATELY!** **THAT'S THE RULE!**

BUT **YOU** STUCK AROUND AND ACTUALLY **ARGUED** WITH HER FRIEND WHO NOW **KNOWS** WHAT **YOU** LOOK LIKE!

IF **ANYTHING** HAD GONE **WRONG** WITH THE CHICK, **YOUR FACE** WOULD BE **ALL OVER** THE POLICE BLOTTERS!

AS **FAR** AS YOU **KNOW!**

BUT NOTHING **DID** GO WRONG!

LOOK! I'M **NOT STUPID!** I **KNOW** WHAT'S AT STAKE IF **ANY** OF US GETS **CAUGHT!**

BUT IF IT MAKES **YOU TWO** FEEL ANY BETTER, **I'LL** STEER **CLEAR** OF **SHENANIGANS** FOR THE **REST** OF THE SEMESTER AND FIND SOMEPLACE **ELSE** TO DO MY HUNTING!

I WAS GETTING **TIRED** OF THAT **SHITHOLE** ANYWAY!

I THINK THAT'S A **SMART** MOVE!

JESUS! I ***KNEW*** THOSE TWO WERE SADISTIC ***ASSHOLES,*** BUT I HAD ***NO IDEA*** THEY WERE ***JUST*** AS SLEAZY AS THAT ***PIECE OF SHIT!***

IT ***DOES,*** HOWEVER, ***EXPLAIN*** HOW LOSERS LIKE ***THAT*** COULD BE SO ***"SUCCESSFUL"*** WITH WOMEN, AND A LOT OF ***OTHER*** THINGS I TRIED TO ***IGNORE*** WHEN I LIVED WITH THEM!

I DIDN'T THINK IT ***POSSIBLE*** FOR THIS TO BECOME ANY ***MORE PERSONAL*** THAN IT ALREADY WAS, BUT IT ***JUST DID!***

IT MIGHT **ALSO** BE A GOOD IDEA FOR YOU TO **SPLIT TOWN** FOR THE SUMMER, LIKE YOU DID **LAST** YEAR! JUST IN CASE!

**HEY!** NO SCRATCH MARKS OR BRUISES TO HEAL UP **THIS** TIME, SO **WHY BOTHER?**

I **THOUGHT** I RECOGNIZED YOU FROM **SOMEWHERE!**


YOU ARE SO FUCKING BUSTED!
SHUT THE FUCK UP!
UHHH... YEAH!
WE'RE IN THE SAME CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CLASS, AREN'T WE?

I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED WITH MY FRIEND AT ***SHENANIGANS*** THE OTHER NIGHT!

UHHHH... SURE!

DON'T SAY A FUCKING ***WORD*** ABOUT ***US*** BEING THERE, TOO! YOU ***GOT*** IT?

WILL YOU JUST FUCKING ***CHILL*** ALREADY? I'LL ***HANDLE*** IT!


I JUST WANTED TO THANK YOU SOO MUCH FOR LOOKING OUT FOR HER THE WAY YOU DID!
I MEAN, WHO KNOWS WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED IF SOME CREEPY GUY, OR GUYS, HAD GOTTEN TO HER BEFORE YOU DID!
HUH?!
UMM, YEAH! MY THINKING EXACTLY! THAT'S WHY I WAS TRYING TO GET HER OUT OF THERE AND HOME!
WELL I'M SORRY IF I CAME OFF A LITTLE BITCHY THAT NIGHT! I WAS JUST WORRIED ABOUT DESI!
NO PROBLEM! YOU WERE JUST BEING A GOOD FRIEND!
THAT'S SWEET OF YOU TO SAY!


MY NAME'S ROBIN, BY THE WAY! ROBIN SULLIVAN!
I'M RONNY... RONNY CHASE! AND THESE ARE MY TWO BUDS, MAX CRAWFORD AND IAN MCKEE!
HI! YEAH, I THINK I'VE SEEN YOU IN PROFESSOR RALSTON'S CONSTITUTIONAL LAW CLASS!
UH, YEAH! 'CAUSE WE'RE IN THERE, TOO!


WELL, I HAVE TO GET GOING! THANK YOU AGAIN FOR BEING SUCH A SWEETHEART THE OTHER NIGHT!
AND I'LL SEE YOU TWO GUYS IN RALSTON'S CLASS LATER!
YEAH!
DEFINITELY!


SAY, UHHH... ROBIN! WAIT A MINUTE!
YEAH?


HOW ABOUT YOU AND I GO **OUT** SOMETIME? MAYBE THIS **SATURDAY?**
I GET IT! WELL, MAYBE SOME **OTHER** TIME THEN?
OH... IT'S **SWEET** OF YOU TO ASK, BUT I **ALREADY** HAVE **PLANS!**
YOU SEE, A FRIEND'S **BAND** IS PLAYING AT **THE UNDERGROUND** THIS WEEKEND AND WE **PROMISED** WE'D GO!

UHH... WHAT?

WELL... TO BE **COMPLETELY** HONEST, I **DON'T** DATE **COLLEGE GUYS!**

I MEAN, I'LL **STILL** HANG OUT WITH THEM, GO TO THEIR **PARTIES** AND **DANCE** WITH THEM AT THE CLUBS!

BUT WHEN IT COMES TO **PERSONAL**, MORE **INTIMATE** ENCOUNTERS, LIKE DATES, I JUST **PREFER** MEN THAT ARE A LITTLE MORE... **MATURE!**


I HOPE YOU'RE NOT OFFENDED!
NO! NOT AT ALL! WHY WOULD I POSSIBLY BE OFFENDED?


WELL I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT! SEE YOU IN CLASS TOMORROW!
♪ BYE, GUYS! ♫

HAW, HAW! OH, MAN! THAT WAS BRUTAL!

NO SHIT! THAT WAS AN EPIC TAKE DOWN! HEH-HEH!

HEY, FUCK YOU! FUCK BOTH OF YOU!


SETTLE DOWN, MAN! SETTLE DOWN! I THOUGHT WE'D AGREED YOU WERE GONNA STEER CLEAR OF SHENANIGANS FOR THE REST OF THE SEMESTER!
GOOD!
NO STUCK UP BITCH LIKE THAT SHOOTS ME DOWN AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!
YEAH... WE DID! AND I'M A MAN OF MY WORD!
BUT THAT COCKTEASE IS NEXT ON MY LIST AND ANYPLACE ELSE SHE GOES IS FAIR GAME!

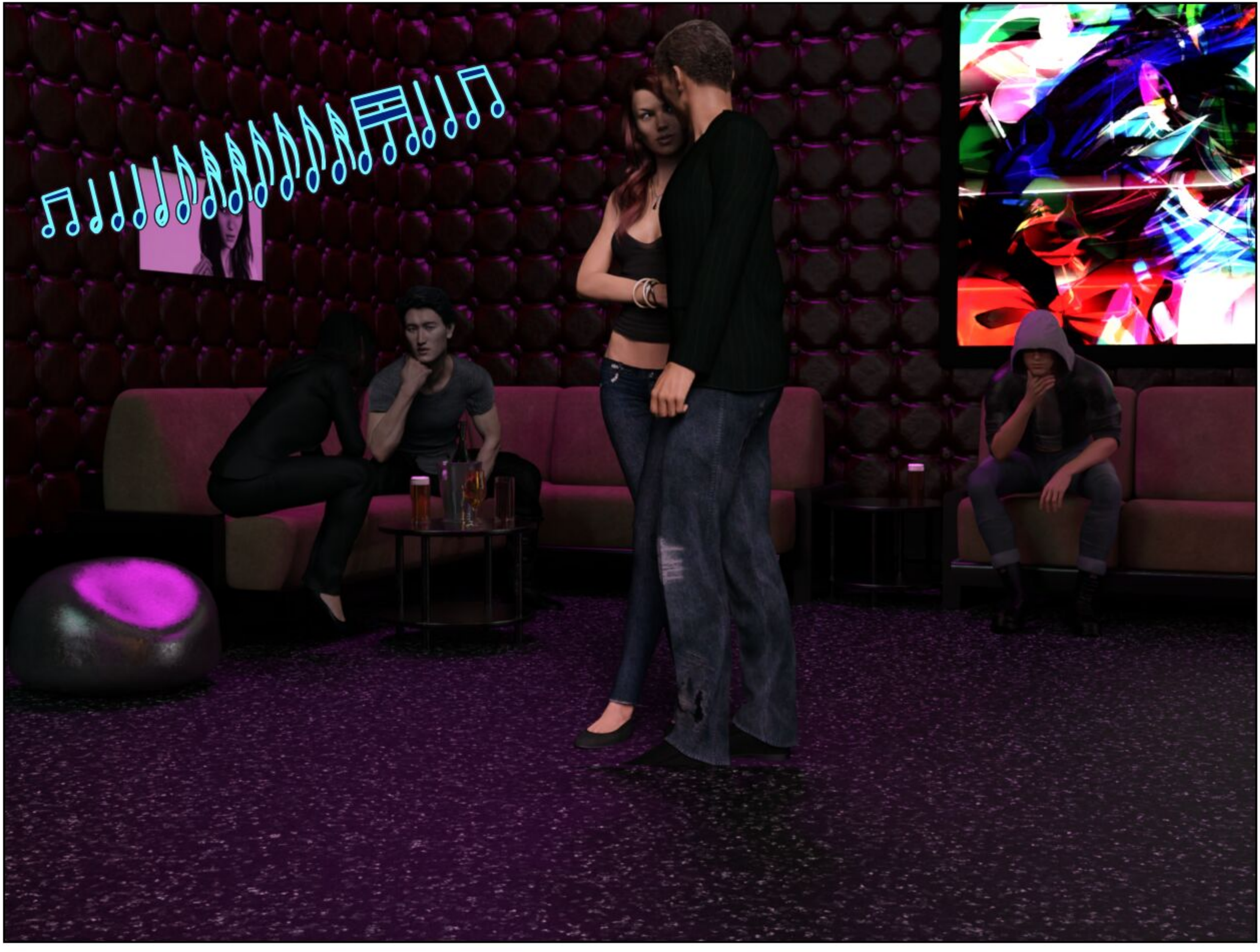
AND I KNOW JUST WHERE SHE'LL BE ON SATURDAY!

WELL, THE *FIRST* PART OF THE PLAN SEEMS TO HAVE WORKED!

AS LONG AS HE'S *FIXATED* ON *ME*, HE *WON'T* BE HURTING ANYONE *ELSE!*

*SIGH!* **NOW** I JUST NEED TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO PROTECT **MYSELF!**

Saturday night, at
*The Underground...*



MAN, THIS PLACE IS ***HOPPING*** WITH HOT CHICKS! I'M GONNA HAVE TO START COMING ***HERE*** MORE OFTEN!

BUT ONLY ***AFTER*** I SCORE MY ***PRIME TARGET*** HERE TONIGHT!

THAT STUCK-UP BITCH, ***ROBIN,*** IS GONNA FALL ***HARD*** FROM HER ***HIGH HORSE*** ONCE I GET HER ***DOSED!***

AND WITH ONLY ***TWO*** OF THEM HERE INSTEAD OF A WHOLE GODDAMN ***GAGGLE,*** IT'LL BE A LOT ***EASIER*** TO ***SEPARATE*** THEM!

***ESPECIALLY*** IF I JUST GO AHEAD AND SPIKE ***BOTH*** THEIR DRINKS AND LET SOME ***OTHER*** LUCKY GUY HAVE HER ***FRIEND!*** HEH-HEH!

THEY **AREN'T** MAKING IT **EASY,** THOUGH! CLUMSY BITCHES **SPILLED** THE **FIRST** DRINKS I SPIKED!

LUCKY FOR **ME** I BROUGHT ENOUGH PILLS FOR A **SECOND SHOT** AT THEM! YEAH, I AM **NOT** GOIN' HOME **ALONE** TONIGHT! HEH-HEH!

"BUT **FIRST** THEY'VE GOTTA GRAB THEIR DRINKS AND WIGGLE THEIR TIGHT ASSES **AWAY** FROM THE BAR! IT'S **TOO** GODDAMN **BRIGHT** AND **CROWDED** OVER THERE!"

IS HE **STILL** WATCHING US?

I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM TALK TO OR INTERACT WITH ANYONE **ELSE** TONIGHT! HAVE YOU?

**GOOD!** THEN BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WE **SHOULD** BE ABLE TO KEEP A CLOSE **EYE** ON HIM ALL NIGHT!

OH YEAH! **"HIDING"** UNDER THAT HOODIE SO WE COULDN'T **POSSIBLY** RECOGNIZE HIM!

**NOPE!** I'M PRETTY SURE HE'S WORKING **SOLO** TONIGHT!


TRUE! BUT THAT'D ONLY BE AN ATTEMPTED ASSAULT, AND HE'D PROBABLY FIND A WAY TO SLITHER OUT OF IT!
BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH! I WANT HIM, AND EVERYONE ELSE INVOLVED, RIDICULED, KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL AND BUSTED FOR A FELONY!
ANYTHING LESS IS UNACCEPTABLE!
YOU KNOW, WE COULD'VE JUST HAD SECURITY HERE WATCH HIM AND THEN HAVE HAS ASS ARRESTED AS SOON AS THEY SAW HIM MESSING WITH OUR DRINKS!
IT'S SOMETHING!

AND **THAT'S** WHAT **TONIGHT** IS ALL ABOUT! SETTING HIM UP FOR AN **EPIC FAILURE** SO HE **LOSES HIS COOL** AND STARTS MAKING **MISTAKES!**

I **KNOW!** SO **IMAGINE** WHAT HIS **FRAIL** LITTLE **EGO** WILL DO WHEN, AFTER ALL HIS **"HARD WORK"**, HE SEES SOME **OTHER** GUY GETTING HIS HANDS ON **THIS!** *GIGGLE!*

YEAH... I THINK I'VE BEEN **INACTIVE** LONG ENOUGH!

WHY DO YOU THINK WE CAME **HERE** OF ALL PLACES?

I THINK SEEING YOU IN THAT **DRESS** IS ENOUGH FOR **ANY** GUY TO LOSE HIS COOL! *GIGGLE!*

IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE **FINALLY** READY TO MOVE ON PAST **ADAM!**

ANY **PROSPECTS** IN PARTICULAR?

REMEMBER THERE WERE ***FOUR*** GUYS I FLIRTED WITH AT ABBY'S PARTY?

THAT WAS ***DAVE!*** THE GUY ***I'M*** TALKING ABOUT IS ***HOLT!*** KIND OF AN ***INTENSE*** GUY, BUT YOU'D EXPECT THAT FROM A ***DAY TRADER!***

YEAH! YOU USED ***ONE*** OF THEM FOR ***PRACTICE*** BEFORE YOUR BIG DATE WITH ADAM, ***RIGHT?***

***REALLY?*** AND WHAT WOULD A ***DAY TRADER*** BE DOING AT A PLACE LIKE ***THIS?***


PLAYING DRUMS!
*GIGGLE!*
OH, WOW!

AND THE *OTHER* TWO GUYS?

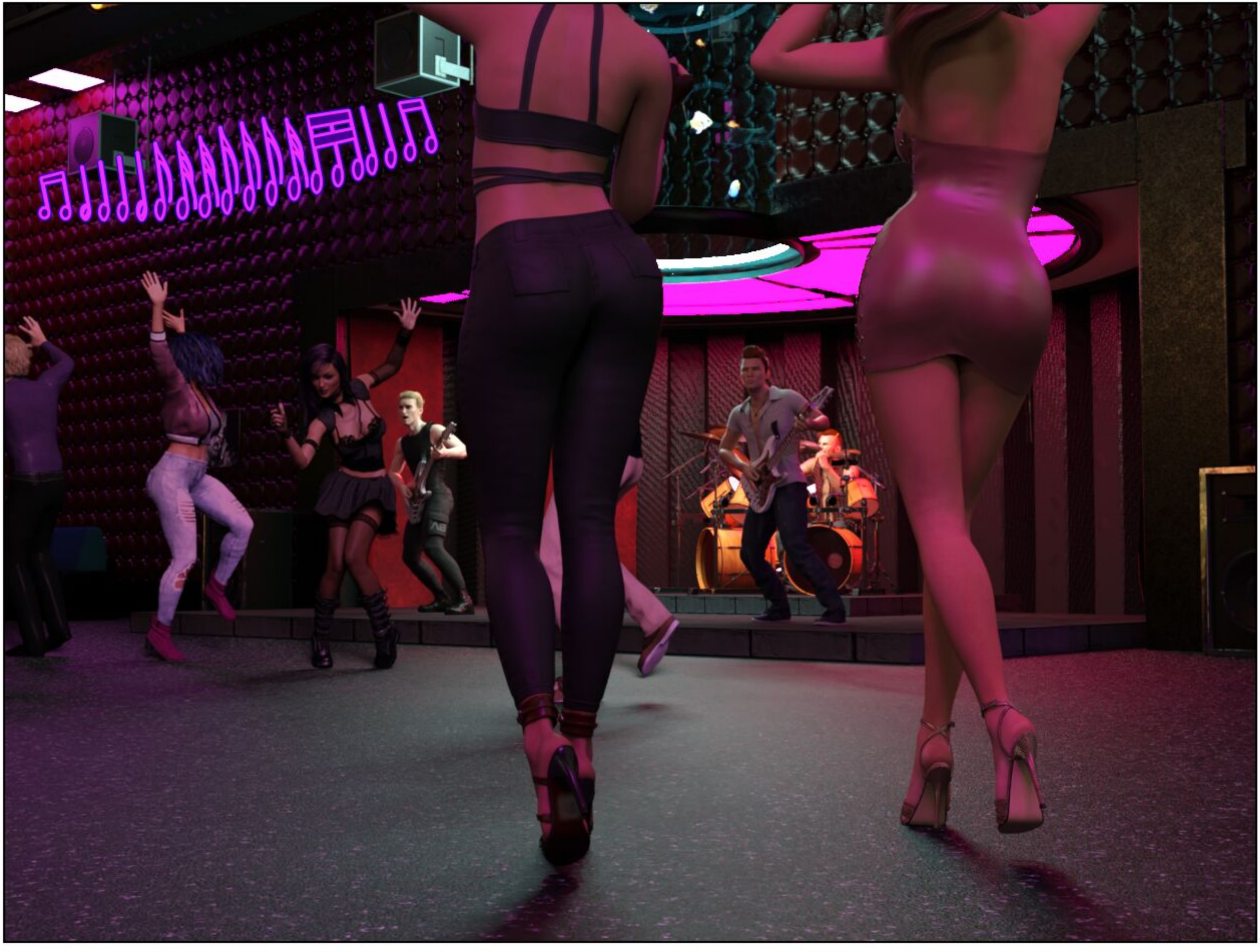
ONE'S A *STOCK BROKER*, THE OTHER'S A *MARKET ANALYST! NEITHER* ONE CURRENTLY *MARRIED* OR IN A *SERIOUS* RELATIONSHIP!

*YOU* HAD THEM VETTED *JUST* FOR *ME*, DIDN'T YOU?

*OF COURSE!* WHAT ARE BEST FRIENDS FOR?

I LOVE YOU *SO* MUCH RIGHT NOW!


WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GET OUT THERE AND SHOW THE GUYS WHAT WE GOT WAITING FOR THEM?
HONEY, YOU READ MY MIND! *GIGGLE!*




FINALLY!

A COUPLE FOR YOU...

... AND THE *LAST TWO* FOR YOUR *FRIEND!*

♫♩♩♩♩♪♫♪♪♪♪♫♩♩♫♪

But what Ronny hopes will be just a few minutes...

Extends to well beyond that...

JESUS! THEY'VE BEEN DANCING FOR ALMOST AN HOUR STRAIGHT! HOW MUCH FUCKING LONGER ARE THEY GONNA BE OUT THERE?

IF THEY DON'T GET BACK TO THOSE DRINKS SOON, THE WAITRESS'LL DUMP 'EM! AND THEN I'M SHIT OUT OF LUCK!

But getting back to their drinks may ***not*** be the ***first*** thing the girls have on their minds...




LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE'RE GOING TO TAKE OUR FIRST BREAK OF THE EVENING!
BUT STICK AROUND! WE'LL BE BACK... EVENTUALLY!

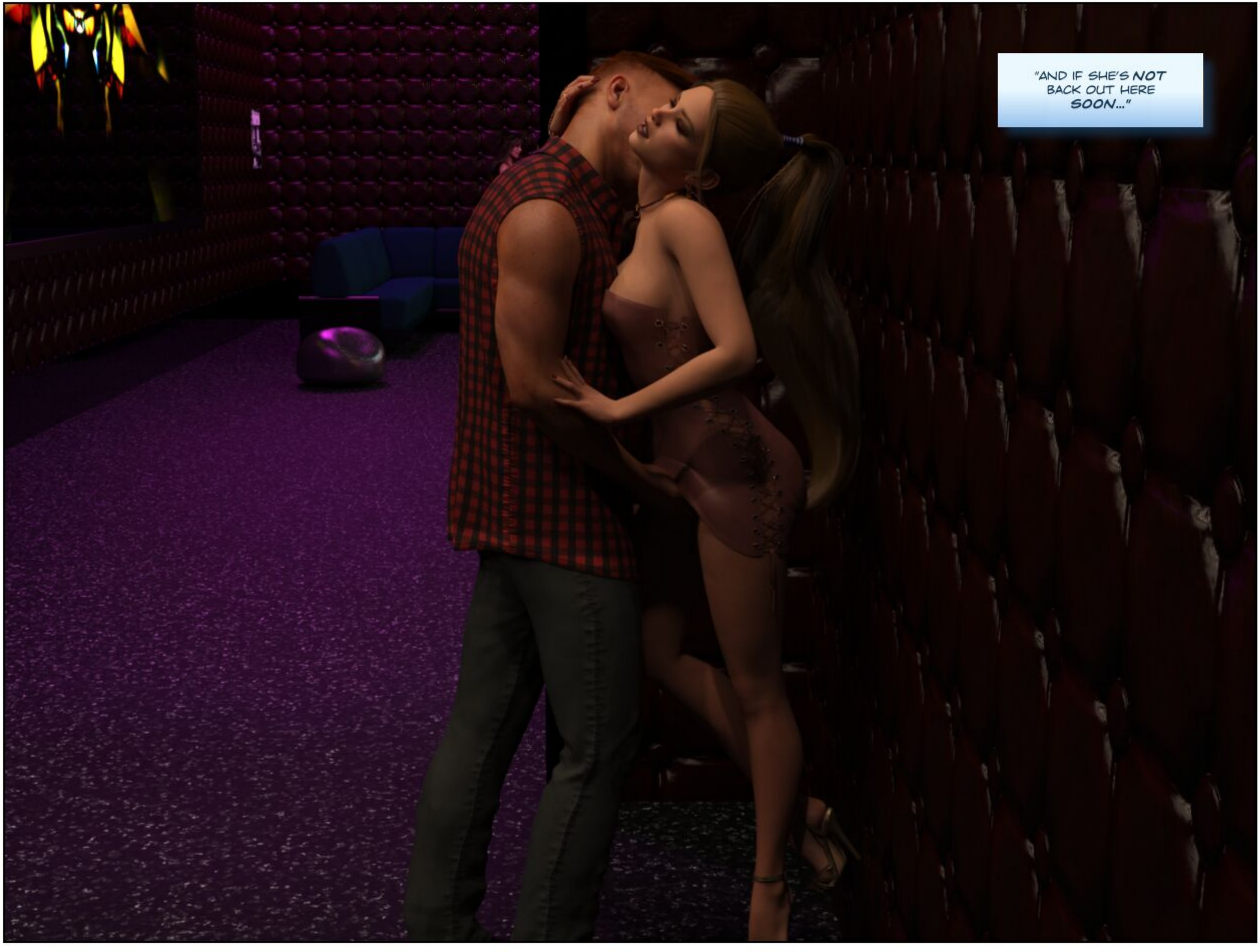
AND **YOU** LOOK **GREAT** DOWN **HERE!**

YOU ALL SOUND **GREAT** UP THERE!


SO MAYBE WE NEED TO FIND SOMEWHERE QUIET AND... CATCH UP!
I KNOW IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE SINCE WE MET AT THAT PARTY...
JUST WHAT I WAS THINKING!

OH, YOU HAVE
**GOT** TO BE FUCKING
**KIDDING** ME!

"SHE'S SO **ENTHRALLED** BY THAT, THAT...**MEAT PUPPET** SHE'S TOTALLY **FORGOTTEN** ABOUT THEIR FUCKING **DRINKS!!**"


"AND IF SHE'S NOT BACK OUT HERE SOON..."

NO!! FUCK!
FUCK! FUCK!

THAT'S IT! I'M GOING TO NAIL THAT BITCH! NO MATTER WHAT I HAVE TO DO!

Even if Ronny's threats were spoken *aloud,* they'd be falling on *deaf ears...*

Because at this particular moment, in a different part of the club...

Robin *really* doesn't care...

The next day...

WELL, THE RESULTS CAME *BACK!* YOUR FRIENDS DRINK HAD THE *EXACT SAME DRUG* WE FOUND IN *YOUR* BLOODSTREAM!

*THAT'S* BECAUSE I'M *NOT!*

YOU DON'T SOUND VERY *SURPRISED!*

AFTER DOING SOME DIGGING INTO AREA POLICE REPORTS, WE'VE FOUND AN ***INCREASING*** NUMBER OF ***UNSOLVED,*** SUSPECTED DATE-RAPE CASES WITH VERY ***SIMILAR M.O.S!***

YOUNG WOMEN WAKING UP IN THEIR ***CARS*** OR ***EVEN*** AT ***HOME*** AFTER A NIGHT OUT AND NOT REMEMBERING ***HOW*** OR ***WHEN*** THEY GOT THERE!

IT ***IS*** FOR THOSE WHO REALIZE THAT ***SOMETIME*** DURING THE NIGHT THEY'VE HAD ***SEX!*** AND, AFTER A BLOOD TEST, THERE'S ***NO TRACE*** OF ANY ***KNOWN*** DATE-RAPE DRUG!

AND, ALMOST ***ALL*** OF THESE OCCURRED AFTER THEY FREQUENTED ONE OF JUST A ***FEW*** CLUBS AROUND TOWN!

***THEY*** HAD THE ***HIGHEST*** REPORTED RATE!

SUCH AS?

THAT'S ***NOT*** THAT ***UNCOMMON!***

LIKE ***SHENANIGANS?***

I'VE **ALSO** HAD MR. CHASE **FOLLOWED** FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS AND IT SEEMS HE SPENDS A **LOT** OF TIME AT THE HOUSE YOU **USED** TO LIVE IN!

**WHAT** MAKES YOU SAY **THAT?**

YEAH, **THAT** DOESN'T SURPRISE **ME** AT ALL! NOW THAT I **KNOW** WHAT HE **LOOKS** LIKE, I **SEE** HIM WITH MY EX-ROOMMATES **ALL THE TIME!**

I'M SURE **THEY'RE** INVOLVED IN THIS **WITH** HIM! HELL, I THINK **THEY** COULD EVEN BE **SUPPLYING** THE PILLS!

FROM **LISTENING** TO THEIR CONVERSATIONS AND PIECING TOGETHER **LITTLE** THINGS I NOTICED WHEN I **LIVED** THERE!

THEY **NEVER** BROUGHT ANY "DATES" **HOME,** BUT THERE **WERE** LOTS OF **GUYS** WHO CAME AND WENT THAT I **DIDN'T** KNOW!

AND, IF I **REMEMBER** RIGHT, **ONE** OF THEM HAS A **BROTHER** WHO'S IN **PHARMACY SCHOOL!** IT JUST ALL **ADDS UP!**

**I AGREE!** BUT TO GET **ABSOLUTE** PROOF, WE'LL NEED TO GET **"CREATIVE"!**

AND THE **KIND** OF CREATIVITY I'M SUGGESTING **ISN'T** ALWAYS **LEGAL!**

**I** HAVE **NO PROBLEM** WITH THAT! SO **WHAT** DO YOU NEED FROM **ME?**

WE NEED TO KNOW ***WHEN*** THE HOUSE WILL BE ***EMPTY!*** YOU ***ALREADY*** TOLD ME WHEN YOU HAVE CLASS ***TOGETHER,*** BUT KNOWING THEIR ***FULL*** COURSE SCHEDULE WOULD BE EVEN ***BETTER!***

AND IF ***THAT*** DOESN'T GIVE US ENOUGH TIME, IS THERE ***ANY WAY*** YOU CAN ***KEEP*** THEM FROM THE HOUSE FOR A ***LONGER*** PERIOD?

I'M PRETTY ***SURE*** I CAN GET YOU THAT!


OH, THAT SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM!

A couple of days later, after class...

IS IT **ME**, OR WAS RALSTON EVEN **MORE** BORING TODAY THAN HE **USUALLY** IS?

HOW WOULD **I** KNOW? I SPENT THE WHOLE TIME CHECKING OUT SULLIVAN'S **TITS!** HEH-HEH!

I ***KNOW,*** MAN! I SWEAR, DURING FINALS, ***I'M*** GONNA ***HAVE*** TO SIT SOMEWHERE WHERE I ***CAN'T*** SEE HER! OTHERWISE, I'M ***DEAD MEAT!***

WELL, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE ***DAMN SURE*** WE'RE ***AVAILABLE*** WHEN RONNIE ***FINALLY*** GETS HER ***"IN THE MOOD!"*** HEH-HEH!

***NO SHIT!*** ALL ***I*** CAN THINK ABOUT WHEN I SEE HER IS PLUNGIN' MY ***FACE*** BETWEEN THOSE AWESOME ***THIGHS*** OF HERS!

***HELL YEAH!*** SLOPPY SECONDS ARE ***BETTER*** THAN ***NOTHING!*** HEH-HEH!


OH, GOOD! I'M GLAD I CAUGHT UP WITH YOU GUYS!
OH, SHIT! YOU DON'T THINK SHE HEARD US, DO YOU?
IF SHE DID, SHE SURE AS FUCK WOULDN'T BE SMILING!


I'M MAX... HE'S IAN!
IT'S IAN AND MAX, RIGHT?
OH! I'M SO SORRY!
THAT'S OKAY! WHAT'S UP?

WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT **YOU,** BUT **I'M** GETTING A LITTLE **FREAKED OUT** ABOUT **FINALS** NEXT WEEK!

I'M **ESPECIALLY** BUMFUZZLED ABOUT **CONSTITUTIONAL LAW!** PROFESSOR RALSTON HAS **REALLY** BEEN PILING IT ON LATELY AND **I'M** STARTING TO FEEL **LOST!**

YEAH! **WE'RE** FEELING THAT, TOO!

THEN MAYBE WE COULD DO A **STUDY SESSION** TOGETHER... THE **THREE** OF US? LIKE **LATER** THIS AFTERNOON?

I WAS **ACTUALLY** THINKING OF THE **LIBRARY!** IT'S **QUIETER** THERE... NO **DISTRACTIONS!**

AND I **REALLY** THINK WE COULD GET A LOT **MORE** DONE THERE!

HEY, **I'M** DOWN WITH **THAT!** YOU COULD COME OVER TO **OUR PLACE!** WE DON'T LIVE **TOO FAR** OFF CAMPUS, AND...

WELL, **YEAH,** BUT...


GREAT IDEA, ROBIN! HOW ABOUT WE MEET YOU THERE AROUND 4?
PERFECT! THANKS SO MUCH FOR THIS GUYS! I REALLY APPRECIATE IT!
HEY! OUR PLEASURE!


SEE YOU GUYS LATER!
YEAH! SEE YOU LATER!
DUDE! WHAT THE FUCK?
WAIT 'TIL SHE'S GONE, GODDAMMIT!

OKAY! **NOW** WHAT ARE YOU **WHINING** ABOUT?

AND DO **WHAT?** DOSE HER **THERE?** THAT'S PRETTY FUCKIN' **STUPID!**

EVEN IF SHE DIDN'T **TELL** ANYONE **WHERE** SHE WAS GOING, **SHE'D** STILL KNOW WHEN SHE **WOKE UP!**

WHY THE **HELL** DID YOU AGREE TO THE **LIBRARY** SO EASILY, MAN?

I'M **SURE** WE COULD'VE **CONVINCED** HER TO GO TO**OUR** PLACE!


LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE! YOU GET TO SPEND A FEW HOURS STARING AT THEM FROM ACROSS A TABLE INSTEAD OF FROM ACROSS THE ROOM!
YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M SORRY, MAN! IT'S JUST THAT WHEN I SEE THOSE TITS, MY MIND TURNS TO MUSH!
I CAN LIVE WITH THAT! HEH-HEH!


JUST TRY NOT TO DROOL TOO MUCH, OKAY!
NO PROMISES!

Several hours later...


I KNOW IT'S UP HERE SOMEWHERE!

AH-HA! I KNEW I'D FIND IT!

YEAH, I KNOW YOU'RE BACK THERE STARING AT MY PANTIES, YOU FECKLESS PIECE OF SHIT!

I'LL BET THE ***PRECEDENT*** WE'RE LOOKING FOR IS HIDING ***RIGHT*** IN ***HERE!***

*SIGH!* THE ***THINGS*** I'LL DO TO KEEP THESE ***ASS WIPES*** OCCUPIED!

I CAN'T THANK YOU GUYS ***ENOUGH*** FOR AGREEING TO THIS! I'M STARTING TO FEEL A LOT MORE ***CONFIDENT*** ABOUT OUR FINALS!

HEY, IT'S HELPING ***US*** OUT, TOO!


YEAH, BY FUELING MY WET DREAMS FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS! HEH-HEH!
DISGUSTING! ACCURATE, BUT... DISGUSTING!

YOU KNOW, GETTING IN ***GOOD*** WITH HER LIKE THIS ***MIGHT*** JUST PUT ***US*** IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO HER ***AND*** HER HOT FRIENDS AT THE ***CLUBS!***

AND YOU KNOW WHAT ***THAT*** MEANS, DON'T YOU?

THE ***EXACT*** SAME THOUGHT HAD CROSSED ***MY*** MIND! HEH-HEH!

***OKAY!*** NOW THAT WE FOUND THAT ***PRECEDENT,*** LET'S GET TO WORK ON THE...


WHOA!
I... I THINK I STOOD UP TOO FAST! I FEEL A LITTLE DIZZY!
WHAT'S WRONG, ROBIN?
BUT YOU WEREN'T SITTING DOWN!

*GIGGLE!* THAT'S RIGHT... I WASN'T! *GIGGLE!*

*DUDE!* DID YOU FUCKIN' *SPIKE* HER DRINK?!

OF *COURSE* NOT!

*NO!* DID *YOU?*

THEN *WHY'S* SHE ACTING LIKE THAT?

BECAUSE *I* SPIKED HER DRINK WHILE *YOU* ALL WERE PLAYING *FOOTSY* IN THE STACKS!

DUDE! WHAT THE FUCK?! HOW DID YOU EVEN KNOW WHERE WE WERE?

I'VE BEEN TAILING HER FINE ASS EVER SINCE SHE STEPPED ONTO CAMPUS THIS MORNING!

I FIGURED SHE WOULDN'T BE HITTING THE CLUBS AGAIN UNTIL THE WEEKEND, AND I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE WAITING!

AND WHEN YOU ALL BROUGHT HER HERE TO THIS NICE, QUIET AND ALMOST DESERTED LIBRARY, I SAW MY CHANCE!

KEEP IT DOWN, MAN! SHE MIGHT HEAR YOU!

HEY! RONNY'S HERE! ♪HI, RONNY! ♫ *GIGGLE!*

SO WHAT IF SHE DOES? SHE'S NOT GONNA REMEMBER ANYTHING AFTER DOWNING THAT SPECIAL LITTLE DIET DRINK OF HERS!

UHHH... **SURE!** CAN'T STUDY 'CAUSE MY HEADS ALL **FUZZY** SO MIGHT AS WELL **PARTY!** *GIGGLE!*

**HEY,** GORGEOUS! READY TO **BLOW** THIS PLACE AND HAVE SOME **FUN?**

**THAT'S** MY GIRL!

HA-HA! YOU SAID RATS-ASS! *GIGGLE!*

I DON'T GIVE A **RAT'S ASS** ABOUT ANY GODDAMN **BLOOD TEST! THAT'S** SOMETHING I'LL DEAL WITH **WHEN** OR **IF** SHE TAKES ONE!

**LOOK,** RONNY... **YOU'RE** PLAYING WITH **FIRE** HERE! MY BROTHER **DESIGNED** THIS STUFF TO WORK WITH **ALCOHOL!**

WE DON'T KNOW **WHAT** ALL THE EFFECTS ARE IF **NO BOOZE** IS INVOLVED!

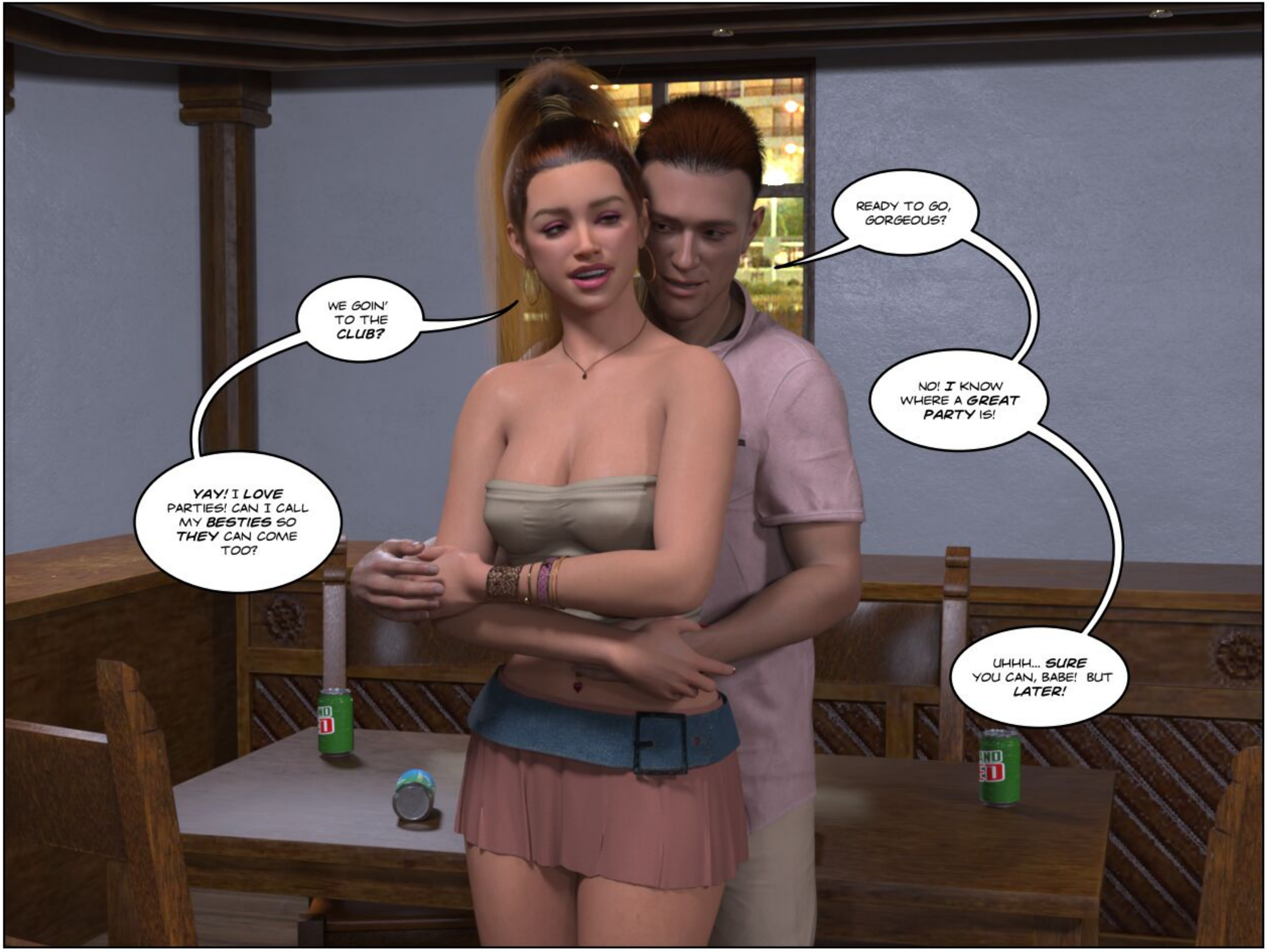
BUT WE **DO** KNOW IT'LL SHOW UP IN A **BLOOD TEST** AFTERWARD... **IF** SHE HAS ONE DONE!

THAT *TICKLES!* *GIGGLE!*

AND AS FOR THE *OTHER* EFFECTS... *ÜBER*-DITZY, *EXTRA* CUDDLY AND ABLE TO WALK *ON HER OWN*... HELL, I SEE *THEM* AS A *VAST* IMPROVEMENT!

WE *MAY* HAVE JUST TAPPED INTO THIS STUFFS *HIDDEN* POTENTIAL! HEH-HEH!

NOW, GET HER STUFF AND WE'LL GET OUT OF HERE!


READY TO GO, GORGEOUS?
WE GOIN' TO THE CLUB?
NO! I KNOW WHERE A GREAT PARTY IS!
YAY! I LOVE PARTIES! CAN I CALL MY BESTIES SO THEY CAN COME TOO?
UHHH... SURE YOU CAN, BABE! BUT LATER!

YOU KNOW, AS MUCH AS I'VE **ALWAYS** WANTED TO GET INTO HER **PANTIES,** I'M NOT SURE **THIS** IS THE **BEST** WAY TO DO IT!

SO, IN **OTHER** WORDS...

***DITTO!*** BUT AS **CRAZY** AS RONNY'S PLAN... OR **LACK** OF ONE... IS, **THIS** MAY BE OUR **ONLY** CHANCE!

GO WITH THE FLOW, MAN! **GO** WITH THE **FLOW!**


A short time later...
HERE WE ARE!
WE'RE THE, UHHH... PRE-PARTY! WE JUST NEED TO GET IT STARTED!
BUT YOU SAID THERE'D BE A PARTY! WHERE'S THE PARTY?


WELL THEN, LET'S GET THIS PARTY STARTED!
WHO WANTS TO DO SHOTS? *GIGGLE!*


YOU HEARD THE LADY! SET UP SOME SHOTS!


OH, YEAH! THIS IS GONNA BE EPIC!

Much later...

OH... *FUCK!* WHAT *TIME* IS IT?


JESUS! WHAT WAS IN THOSE GODDAMN SHOTS!
I REMEMBER DOING A SECOND... OR WAS IT A THIRD? AND THAT'S ABOUT IT!


I DON'T 'MEMBER CRASHIN', OR EVEN WHO'S FUCKIN' BED THIS IS!
SHIT! I'M STILL SO FUCKED UP DON'T EVEN 'MEMBER IF I FUCKED ROBIN OR NOT!
HUH?
ZZZZZZ

ALL RIGHT! LOOKS LIKE ROBIN CALLED HER LITTLE ***FRIENDS*** OVER AFTER ALL!

DAMN ***CONSIDERATE*** OF HER SINCE SHE ***COCK-BLOCKED*** ME FROM GETTING ***THIS*** ONE LAST WEEK!

ZZZZZZ

OH, **MAN!** THAT IS ONE **TASTY** ASS... THAT I **VAGUELY** 'MEMBER **TAPPING** SOMETIME LAST NIGHT!

A TASTY ASS THAT NEEDS A SECOND GO... **JUST** IN CASE! HEH-HEH!

ZZZZZZZZZ

AND WILL YA **LOOK** AT THAT! THE **GRAND PRINCESS** HERSELF ALL **TUCKERED OUT** AFTER A NIGHT OF WHAT I'M **SURE** WAS THE **BEST SEX** SHE'S **EVER** HAD!

**TOO BAD** SHE WON'T REMEMBER **ANY** OF IT! HEH-HEH!


AND SINCE MY MEMORY'S A LITTLE FOGGY TOO, IT'S ONLY FAIR I REFRESH IT WITH A REPEAT PERFORMANCE!
ZZZZZZZZZ


I'VE ALWAYS LOVED TAKING CHICKS THIS WAY... 'SPECIALLY WHEN THEY HAVE ASSES THIS SPECTACULAR!

OH, YOU **ARE** ONE TIGHT BITCH, **AREN'T** YOU? DOESN'T SURPRISE **ME,** THOUGH! DOUBT YOU LET **ANYONE** NEAR YOUR PERFECTLY **PRISTINE** ASS!

AT LEAST TILL **NOW!** HEH-HEH!

I KNEW THAT STUCK UP BIT WAS JUST AN ACT! EVEN ASLEEP YOU JUST LOVE GETTIN' IT UP THE ASS!

WELL I'M HERE TO OBLIGE YOU, PRINCESS! *CHUCKLE!*

UUNGH!

OH, **YEAH!** GIMME THAT ASS, BITCH! YOU **LOVE** IT!

OOOHHHH ...

whoomp whoomp whoomp

Meanwhile, downstairs...

HEY! MAX! YOU HERE?

ANYONE? HELLO?

whoomp whoomp whoomp

OKAY, THIS IS ***BULLSHIT!*** WE ALL GET A ***CRYPTIC*** EMAIL FROM ***CRAWFORD*** LAST NIGHT ABOUT A HUGE ***"GOING OUT OF BUSINESS"*** SALE THIS MORNING AND ***NOW*** THE FUCKER ISN'T EVEN ***HERE!***

THIS ***BETTER*** BE FOR ***REAL,*** 'CAUSE WITH ALL THE END OF SEMESTER ***PARTYING*** COMING UP, I NEED TO ***STOCK UP*** ON THOSE ***MAGIC PILLS*** OF HIS!

OH, FUCK YEAH!

whoomp whoomp whoomp

UMMM... I THINK I ***KNOW*** WHERE HE IS!


AW, FUCK, MAN! I DO NOT NEED TO HEAR THAT SHIT FIRST THING IN THE MORNING!
TELL ME ABOUT IT!
HEY, MAX! PULL OUT AND GET YOUR ASS DOWN HERE!

SINCE WHEN DID *YOU* MOVE IN HERE, CHASE?

YEAH... WE HEARD! *UGH!*

WHA' THE HELL YOU *LOSERS* MAKIN' SO MUCH

*DIN'T!* JUST TAKIN' CARE OF SOME UNFINISHED *BUSINESS* FROM

Y'ALL JUST JEALOUS **YOU** DIN'T WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF A

NOTHIN' LIKE TAPPIN' A **FINE** PIECE O' ASS **FIRST** THING IN THE

HELL! I **MAY** JUST GO RIGHT BACK UP FOR **SECONDS!**

**WHATEVER!** JUST WAIT TILL WE **LEAVE** FIRST, OKAY? AND TELL **MAX** TO GET HIS ASS **DOWN** HERE!

WE... WASS ALL THE *NOISE* 'BOUT DOWN HERE?

AN' WHY'S MY *BUTT* HURT SO MUCH?

*HOLY SHIT!*

HEY, HOT STUFF! READY FOR *ANOTHER* GO AROUND? HEH-HEH!

*WHAT THE FUCK?!*

JESUS! IS THAT YOU, MCKEE?

YEAH...'COURSE ! WHA TIME IZIT? WE STILL PARTYIN'?

MAN... FEEL SOOO FUNKY!

CAN'T IMAGINE WHY? HEH-HEH!

WAIT! WHA...? WHA TH' FUCK?

GET YOUR ASS **DOWN** HERE, CRAWFORD! **YOU** GOTTA **SEE** THIS!

WHA' TH' FUCKS ALL THE **NOISE** DOWN HERE?

NO, NO, NO, NO...

**WHOA!** WHEN'D MY **HAIR** GET SO LONG?


WHYZ THAT CHICK NAKED?
OH, MAN! THIS SHIT IS GOLD! HEH-HEH!
AN' WHEN'D I GET TITS?
OH SHIT... OH SHIT... OH SHIT...

Meanwhile, on the other side of campus...

*OH MY GOD!* THIS IS GOING SO MUCH *BETTER* THAN I EVER *THOUGHT* IT WOULD!

PICTURES OF *THOSE THREE* WILL BE *ALL OVER* SOCIAL MEDIA WITHIN THE *HOUR!*

*WE* WON'T EVEN *HAVE* TO RELEASE ANY OF THE VIDEO *WE* HAVE!

*THANK GOD!* I *NEVER* WANT TO HAVE TO SEE WHAT WENT ON IN *THAT* BEDROOM *EVER AGAIN!* *UGH!*

JUST A TESTAMENT TO THE **QUALITY** OF **YOUR** WORK AND HOW MUCH OF A **SLIMEBALL** RONNY IS!

I CAN'T **BELIEVE** HOW **REALISTIC** THOSE TWO LOOK! I **KNEW** YOU WERE **GOOD**, BUT... **JESUS!**

IT'S **WHAT** I **DO**, SWEETIE! GIVEN A LITTLE MORE **TIME**, EVEN THE GUYS THAT **AREN'T** STILL FUCKED UP ON DRUGS WOULDN'T KNOW THEY WEREN'T **REAL** GIRLS!

YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW **SUPREMELY** SATISFYING IT WAS SPIKING **THEIR** DRINKS WITH THE **SAME SHIT** THEY DRUGGED **ME** AND SO MANY **OTHER** GIRLS WITH!

FORTUNATELY, THEY WERE VERY **EASY** TO FIND WHEN **SKIP** AND I WERE THERE **YESTERDAY** HIDING THESE CAMERAS!

AND SWAPPING THEM OUT FOR IDENTICAL-LOOKING ***CINNAMON EXTRACT*** CAPSULES HELPED ***TIP*** ME OFF THAT THEY WERE TRYING TO DRUG ME ***AGAIN*** IN THE LIBRARY!

YOU ***DID*** SWAP THEM ALL ***BACK*** BEFORE WE LEFT, DIDN'T YOU?

WHY?

RIGHT AFTER SKIP AND I ***CARRIED*** THEIR UNCONSCIOUS ***CARCASSES*** UP TO THE BEDROOM!

WE ***EVEN*** LEFT A FEW ***CONSPICUOUSLY*** PLACED SO ANY CASUAL ***OBSERVER*** COULD ***SPOT*** THEM!

I BELIEVE WE'RE ***JUST*** ABOUT TO FIND OUT!

knock knock

THIS IS THE *POLICE!* WE HAVE A *WARRANT* TO *SEARCH* THESE PREMISES!

OH, FUCK!!

HOW DID YOU GET A WARRANT SO *EASILY?*

WELL, IN CASE THE ANONYMOUS ***TIP*** ABOUT A DATE-RAPE DRUG RING ***ISN'T*** ENOUGH, YOU JUST HAVE TO FIND A MORE ***SYMPATHETIC*** JUDGE!

WHICH ISN'T ***DIFFICULT*** CONSIDERING HOW ***MANY*** JUDGES HAVE ***DAUGHTERS!***

DO YOU THINK THEY'LL ***FIND*** ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO CONVICT THEM ***ALL?***

ALMOST ASSUREDLY! ***ESPECIALLY*** IF ANY ***ONE*** OF THEM OPTS TO TESTIFY ***AGAINST*** THE OTHERS!

WHICH WILL ***PROBABLY*** BE ***IAN*** ONCE HE FINDS OUT WHAT ***RONNIE*** DID TO HIM! *CHUCKLE!*


MUM'S THE WORD! ALTHOUGH ONCE THE STORY BREAKS, I'M SURE SHE'LL SUSPECT WE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT!
NO SHIT! AUNT ABBY IS NO DUMMY!
AND REMEMBER, NOT A WORD OF ANY OF THIS TO ABBY!
TRUE, BUT SUSPECTING AND KNOWING ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS! AS LONG AS SHE CAN CLAIM "PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY", NONE OF THIS WILL EFFECT HER CAMPAIGN!


I'LL NEVER TIRE OF HEARING YOU CALL ME THAT!
AS USUAL, I COULDN'T HAVE DONE ANY OF THIS WITHOUT YOUR HELP!
THANK YOU, UNCLE HANK!


COME ON, NORA! I BELIEVE SOMEONE HERE HAS FINALS TO STUDY FOR!
*GIGGLE!* THANKS... SIS!
SAY NO MORE! GOOD LUCK... SIS!


*SIGH!*
POSITIVE
VIBES
STREET WEAR
URBAN STYLE


A few days later...

DID YOU **NOTICE** WHO ALL **DIDN'T** SHOW UP FOR **FINALS** TODAY?

I **HEAR** THEY'VE MISSED **ALL** THEIR FINALS!

CAN YOU **BLAME** THEM? I MEAN, HAVE YOU **SEEN** THOSE **PICTURES?**

WHO **HASN'T?** HEH-HEH!

A few days later...

I WOULDN'T *ACTUALLY* SAY I *"ACED"* THEM!

UMM, YEAH!

I HEAR YOU *ACED* YOUR FINALS! *NICE JOB!*

DID YOU GET *"A"S* ON ALL OF THEM?

*ACED!*

NO! BUT I'M ***SURE*** IT'S JUST TO ***CONGRATULATE*** YOU ON ACEING YOUR FINALS AND ***PUMPING YOU UP*** FOR THE ***BAR EXAM!***

I MEAN, WHAT ***ELSE*** COULD IT ***POSSIBLY*** BE?

DID ABBY SAY ***WHY*** SHE WANTED TO SEE ME?

UH... NOTHING ***I*** CAN THINK OF!

***UH-OH!*** TIME TO ***PLAY DUMB!***


ROBIN, DEAR, I WANT TO START OFF BY SAYING HOW **PROUD** I AM OF YOU REGARDING YOUR FINAL EXAMS!
I'M **NOT** SURPRISED, THOUGH, CONSIDERING HOW **HARD** YOU'VE WORKED THIS LAST YEAR!
**THANK YOU,** ABBY! THAT MEANS A **LOT** TO ME!

I **ALSO** WANTED TO RELATE SOME NEWS THAT YOU MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE **ALREADY** HEARD CONCERNING YOUR **EX-ROOMMATES!**

IF YOU MEAN THE **PICTURES** THAT HAVE **FLOODED** SOCIAL MEDIA THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS, THEN YEAH... **I'VE** SEEN THEM!

AND ALTHOUGH **SOME** PEOPLE ARE SAYING THEY GOT **PRANKED, I** COULDN'T CARE **LESS!** CONSIDERING WHAT **THEY** PUT **ME** THROUGH BEFORE I MOVED OUT, IT'S **NICE** TO SEE THERE'S **STILL** A LITTLE **KARMA** IN THE WORLD!

I WHOLEHEARTEDLY **AGREE!** BUT I **WASN'T** TALKING ABOUT THOSE **PICTURES!**

YOU **WEREN'T?**

NO! **THEY,** AND SEVERAL **OTHERS,** WERE ACTUALLY **ARRESTED** THE OTHER NIGHT FOR ILLEGAL **DRUG** POSSESSION WITH INTENT TO **DISTRIBUTE!**

**OH MY GOD!** WHAT **KIND** OF DRUGS?

I DON'T KNOW THE SPECIFICS... **YET!** BUT I'M **TOLD** THEY WERE A **NEW** TYPE OF **DATE-RAPE DRUG!**

THOSE **ASSHOLES!**

NOW... I'M GOING TO ASK YOU THIS ONCE, AND ONCE ONLY,DEAR...

IS THERE ANYTHING GOING ON THAT I NEED TO KNOW OR BE CONCERNED ABOUT?

NOTHING AT ALL, ABBY!

FROM WHAT IT **SOUNDS** LIKE, THE PEOPLE **RESPONSIBLE** FOR SO MUCH **GRIEF** TO ME AND MANY **OTHER** GIRLS GOT **COCKY** AND **CARELESS,** RESULTING IN THEIR **OWN** DOWNFALL!

YES! **AND** THAT I'M **RELIEVED** AND **HAPPY** TO SEE THEM **FINALLY** GET WHAT'S **COMING** TO THEM!

AND THAT'S **ALL** YOU WANT TO TELL **ME** ABOUT THAT?

AS AM **I!**

NOW THAT WE'VE GOT ***THAT*** NONSENSE OUT OF THE WAY, CAN WE ***FINALLY*** GET BACK TO WHAT'S ***REALLY*** IMPORTANT?

LIKE GETTING ***THIS*** ONE READY FOR HER IMPENDING ***BAR EXAM AND*** THE PROMOTION OF A NEW ***NAMED PARTNER*** IF AND WHEN ***YOU*** WIN YOUR ***ELECTION*** NEXT WEEK?

HINT, HINT! WINK, WINK! NUDGE, NUDGE!

I ***AGREE!*** WE HAVE ***ENOUGH*** ON OUR PLATES WITHOUT ***WASTING*** ANY OF ***OUR*** TIME WORRYING ABOUT A FEW ***LOATHSOME*** CREATURES!

AND AS MUCH I'D ***LOVE*** TO ORDER YOU TO ***IMMEDIATELY*** HUNKER DOWN AND START ***STUDYING*** FOR YOUR EXAM, I ***KNOW*** YOU'LL DO ***NO SUCH THING*** UNTIL ***AFTER*** THIS ELECTION IS OVER!

SO, IF ***I*** PROMISE NOT TO EVEN ***MENTION*** THE BAR EXAM UNTIL ***AFTER*** THE ELECTION, WILL ***YOU*** PROMISE TO ADHERE TO THE POST-ELECTION ***STUDY SCHEDULE*** I ***ASSIGN*** YOU TO?

YOU KNOW ME ***SO*** WELL! *GIGGLE!*

*DEAL!*

OKAY THEN! NOW LET'S GET OUT THERE AND GO WIN ME AN ELECTION!

NOTHING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER, ABBY!


WHY THE HELL WOULDN'T I? YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS OF HER AS HER OWN DAUGHTER, YOU KNOW!
YOU'RE STILL ON BOARD WITH HIRING HER, RIGHT?
JUST CHECKING!

NOW YOU'RE TALKIN' MY LANGUAGE! *GIGGLE!*

JUST MAKING SURE IN CASE I WIN AND SHE STILL WANTS TO COME TO WORK FOR DOBBINS, MCCOY AND WEATHERS!

Two months later, shortly after Abigail Morgan is sworn in as the new State's Attorney's General and Robin passes her bar exams with flying colors...

OLD MONEY

FAST FOOD

EAST CAFFEA .CO

OKAY LADIES! I'M AT THE COFFEE BODEGA AT 7TH AND 45TH! SO WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?


YOU ALL MADE A HUGE DEAL ABOUT GETTING ALL DOLLED UP AND HITTING THE CLUBS TONIGHT TO CELEBRATE MY PASSING THE BAR!
BUT HERE I AM, WAITING FOR ALMOST A HALF HOUR, AND NOT A SINGLE TEXT FROM ANYONE!
NOT COOL, LADIES! NOT... COOL!


The New York
GREAT WAY TO START THE TWO-WEEK VACATION JILL *INSISTED* I TAKE BEFORE COMING TO WORK *FULL TIME!*
I *TOLD* HER I COULD START *RIGHT AWAY,* OR *EVEN* JUST TAKE *ONE* WEEK, BUT SHE WAS PRETTY DAMNED *ADAMANT* THAT I TAKE *TWO FULL WEEKS* TO MYSELF FIRST!


SHIT!
I HAVEN'T HAD TWO WEEKS TO MYSELF SINCE I CAN REMEMBER!
AND WITH NORA, LIZ AND DESI ALL WORKING DURING THE DAYS, WHAT THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH ALL THAT TIME?
FINALLY! SOMEONE HAS THE DECENCY TO EXPLAIN WHY THEY'RE SO DAMN LATE!
BUZZ


I'M SO, SO SORRY, ROBIN! BUT THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE OF PLANS!
OKAY, THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD, NORA! I'VE BEEN STANDING AROUND HERE SO LONG THE GUY IN THE BODEGA HAS ASKED ME OUT THREE TIMES AND I'M THIS CLOSE TO SAYING "YES"! WHERE ARE YOU GUYS?
"CHANGE OF PLANS?" SERIOUSLY?
TAXI

EAST CAFFEA .CO

CORNISH PASTIES

WHAT KIND OF *"SOMETHING"* COULD MAKE *ALL* OF YOU CHANGE PLANS SO DAMN *SUDDENLY?*

*YOU* MADE ALTERNATE PLANS FOR *ME? WHAT THE HELL,* NORA?

SOMETHING *CAME UP* AT THE LAST MINUTE AND *NONE* OF US CAN MAKE IT!

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND *EVENTUALLY!* BUT FOR *NOW,* JUST KNOW THAT WE MADE *ALTERNATE PLANS* FOR YOU!

EXCUSE ME, MISS!

I MEAN, THESE HAD BETTER BE PRETTY ***SPECTACULAR*** PLANS CONSIDERING HOW ***MUCH*** I WAS ***LOOKING FORWARD*** TO THIS!

***UGH!*** HOLD ON, NORA! I THINK THE ***BODEGA*** GUY HAS ***FRIENDS!***

YES?!

I'M IN TOWN FOR **TWO WEEKS** WITH **NOTHING** TO DO! CAN **YOU** SUGGEST ANY ACTIVITIES THAT MIGHT **INTEREST** A GUY LIKE **ME?**

Access city services here.

WiFi


ROBIN? YOU STILL THERE? ROBIN?

TWO WEEKS, HUH? OH, *I* THINK WE CAN COME UP WITH A *FEW* THINGS THAT *MIGHT* INTEREST A GUY LIKE *YOU!*


Access city services here.
WIFI
ATM
YEAH... I THINK HE'S THERE!
'CAUSE I HEARD HIS VOICE! THAT'S HOW!


Access city services here.
HANG UP THE PHONE, SWEETIE! HANG UP THE...
OH HELL... NEVER MIND!


Access city services here.
EAST CAFE
DISCOVER THE CITY
TALK TO YOU IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS, SWEETIE! LOVE YOU!
Fin