ADULTS ONLY

20 illustrations

HER FOR THE HOLIDAYS

HOLIDAY TREATS #3

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack



TRANSGENDER TALES OF Transformation

SICK PUPPY PRESS

JOE SIX PACK

HER FOR THE HOLIDAYS

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A Tales of Transformation Story



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Her for the Holidays



"You're fired! Clear out your desk!" Damon Spencer shouted to his long-time head of operations. "I want you out of the place in fifteen minutes!" He then stormed out of the office, fuming.

Behind him, his secretary shook her head. She lingered for a moment, her big eyes behind her big glasses looking around to make sure she could say what she needed to say.

"You're not fired," she said in a whisper. "Don't worry about it."

"I know," the sweating executive replied.

The secretary looked embarrassed and continued on her way, trailing her boss. That was half her job it seemed, telling people they weren't actually fired after Mr. Spencer fired someone.

"Can't even do his fucking job without fucking over the the whole fucking department!" Damon continued on yelling, not caring who could hear him in the crowded office full of cubicles.

Damon Spencer ran the advertising firm of Spencer Liszt Associates with anger, manifesting itself as a relentless scorched-Earth attitude that incinerated anyone and everyone who dared get in his way. As the fastest-rising advertising firm in Los Angeles, he was driven to make sure it became #1 with the energy of a wolf defending his last morsel of food.

"You tell the whole fucking operations department that I want every fucking one of them to email me five fucking reasons why they shouldn't be fired! Every fucking one of them, you got it?" He yelled at his secretary as they continued on, heading to his palatial office. "By two!"

"Yes sir," his beleaguered secretary replied. She was very good at her job, and faithfully executed her boss's commands, even if she felt like the office was about to burst into flames at any given moment. Her immense proficiency and capacity to endure limitless, degrading insults ensured that she had lasted longer than anyone else at this job — three weeks.

They burst into Damon Spencer's office with all the grace of an express train off the rails. The secretary checked her tablet. "You have messages from McMillan Staffing about the unpaid payroll, Hargrove Real Estate about the expired lease, and from Jankman, Dyre & Vaile about the lawsuits."

"Which ones?" Damon demanded to know as he sat in a huge leather office chair behind his glass desk that were both comically oversized.

"All of them. All fifty three."



"Fuck!" Damon yelled even louder than before. "Can't they fucking do their own fucking job?"

He looked up at the secretary, who had clenched every part of her body together.

"Why are you still here? You want someone to change your fucking bloody panties for you? Get back to your fucking desk and do some work for once!"

"Your mom also called."

"Jesus fucking christ on a fucking..."

He punched a button on his phone. "Hello sweetie," an old woman replied.

"Hi Mom," Damon answered with a soft, loving tone. "I'm sorry I missed your call. I hope everything's okay." He covered the receiver and pointed at the door. "Get the fuck out, you donkey-faced cunt!" He yelled at his secretary. She quickly turned and dashed out. As she did, he talked to the phone once more. "I hope Dad didn't get his hand stuck in the dryer vent again."

"Oh no," his mother replied with a kind, frail tone to her aged voice. "Your father learned his lesson after that happened the third time. Did I tell you about Old Man Kramer getting trapped on the roof of his garage? He was up there for three days..."

"Oh, wow," he interrupted. "Listen, things are kinda crazy here, Mom. Busy day. Is there something urgent? Not to rush you or anything."

"Well, I don't want to keep you, honey. I know how much everyone depends on you to keep your little business going. You work so hard. Are you sure you shouldn't hire someone on to help out more?"

Damon resisted the urge to tell her that he had 550 employees to "help out." He had never really felt the need to inform her of the real scope of what he was doing, with $2.3B in contracts for advertising and promotional services done every month.

"I know the Petersons have a boy who could do some paint work," she continued. "Do you need anyone to do some painting? He did a fine job with our fence this year."

"Well, painting isn't something we have a lot of call for, but I'll keep it in mind," Damon replied, wrapping the phone cord around his fist seven times. "Was there anything I could..."

"I was just calling about the holidays," his mother said. "Since you said you were coming up here for a visit. You know it's been so long since we've even seen you, honey. It'll be nice to have you around the house. And I know your sisters miss you..."

Damon searched his memory and remembered that he had made a very vague commitment to visit his family for Christmas, but had only done so with the idea that he would cancel at some point. He glanced at his calendar, revealing it to be November 27th. He had waited a bit too long.

"You know Mom, this is kind of is our busy season... People want to have end-of-year ROI reports and then comes New Years advertising budgets..."

His mother was even more excited, missing the attempt to cut her expectations short. "I know, and that's why I'm so grateful you made the time this year. I've told everyone in my sewing circle that my big, successful son is coming home. And of course, brining his girlfriend."

His mother, now 68, had been on his case about finding a "girlfriend" for decades. There were several women he'd hooked up with over the years, but that was just his lifestyle. The idea that he'd need or want a "girlfriend" was as quaint at the quilts his mother sent him every year.

Besides, he was a driven man, with no time for relationships and no patience to nurture a romance. He needed results, quick and fast. He'd never found anyone like that. All the women he'd ever met were either one-timers or women that needed massive upkeep. Then, there was his personal issues with women...

So a few years ago, he'd just started to claim he was in a long-term relationship. That seemed to satisfy his mother and kept her nagging to a minimum.

Over the years his lies had become more and more elaborate, to the point where he had even given his fictional partner a backstory and a history, sending some pictures from some random woman's instagram feed to prove her existence. It had worked beautifully.

"Well, you're not boasting, I hope."

"You are everything a proud mother wants to boast about, honey. Now, Damon..."

"Listen Mom, I'm as optimistic about getting away from work as I was when I made that promise... I mean... It's very busy here. Very busy."

There was silence on the other end of the line. Damon scowled on his end, knowing his mother was going to make this difficult.

"I understand..." She said, he voice almost too quiet to be heard. "I don't know what I'll tell your father... Or the ladies at the hairdresser..."

Damon had to throw out the thinnest of ropes for her. "Listen Mom, I'll see what I can do, okay? I just don't want you to get your hopes up."

There was even more silence.

"Honest Mom, I'll try as hard as I can, but I just can't guarantee I can make it. You understand, don't you?"

More silence.

"Mom?"

"I'll let you get back to work, honey. I'll say hello to your father and your sisters for you. You make sure you have enough to eat and get 8 hours of sleep, all right?"

"I will, Mom. Merry Christmas."

A very long pause. "Merry Christmas."

Damon put the phone down gently.

"Fucking passive aggressive bitch," he said. He then looked around the desk. "Where are my fucking messages?" he yelled loud enough to be heard through the walls.



"It looks like another cold winter," said Carl Liszt, who was resting in a very comfortable, plush red velvet chair. "There's frost in the hills."

"I couldn't take off my jacket when I left the bungalow this morning," Damon said. "I had to turn on the heater in the car for a few minutes. It's going to be a killer, that's for sure."

The lounge at 231 Chase Street was upscale, but only for other people. For Damon Spencer and Carl List, it was kind of a guilty pleasure, a hideaway from

their normal more haughty haunts. The place was lit dimly, and the spaces in between tables was enough to have private conversations.

"So why did you ask me here, Carl?" Damon said, taking a sip of the whisky he had been nursing for the past hour. "I would rather be at the office. After all, someone has to run our business."

As co-founders of the Spencer Liszt Associates advertising agency, Carl and Damon were well acquainted, and while Carl was no longer involved with day-to-day business operations, he did retain controlling ownership in the company. Carl sipped his whisky and contemplated the glass when he was finished. "Our business is exactly what I'm worried about, Damon."

"Profits are up, stock price is up, expansion is up, everything is going fine. Has that greedy wife of yours been whispering in your ear about getting a piece?"

"No, no," Carl replied. "And Tiffany is not the type."

"Bullshit," Damon said.

"You don't have a very high opinion of women, do you?"

"They've earned it."

"I see. Damon, I just spent the last two hours talking your secretary out of suing the shit out of us."

"She went over my head? She's fired."

"She's not coming back. I just paid for her to take two weeks in Tahiti on the company. When she comes back, maybe she'll reconsider suing you — and us — for abuse, wage theft, sexual harassment..."

"I never touched her!" Damon objected. "Okay, that one time, but that little slut was begging for it!"

Carl sat up straight in his chair. "Damon, we've known each other for a long time, and I know you operate red hot. You go all-in and go hard. But that has a downside."

"Yeah, people can't keep up."

"You're going to get this whole business shut down unless you can rein it in, Damon. We've settled a dozen lawsuits from former employees and contractors dealing with your behavior, and I'm sick of it. At some point, whatever you make for us is not enough to justify what you're costing us."

"I'm not changing the way I work, Carl."

"What I want you to do is to take some time off. Just decompress."

"Never. Things are too important right now. I've got too many projects going. Unless I can..."

"You have to make the time!" Carl insisted. "You either make the time, or you're out of time. It's that simple. No more lawsuits!"

Damon sighed. "So it's come to this."

"Damon, just step away for a few weeks. A month. Take December off. Go somewhere and get some perspective." Carl held his drink up to the bar to signal for a refill. "You can do the things you need to be here for, that's why they invented business jets. But for now, I want you to take the the month off."

"Fuck that."

"Let me rephrase that. You take a month off, or I'll kick you to the curb."

"You can't."

"I'll hire however many lawyers I need to break our contract and buy you out."

The two men didn't look at each other. They just sat for a few moments and didn't say anything.

"You might as well just kill me dead. This company is my heart and soul."

"I was there with you on day one, Damon. I know how much we owe you. I don't want to lose your genius and your energy. But if it goes on like this, it'll end. One way or another, it'll come to a crashing halt."

"What do I have to do?"

"Just go. I don't care where. Hawaii or the gates of hell. We'll call if you're needed. In January, we'll talk more."

"This is bullshit, and you know it, Carl."

"Take the time, Damon. Who knows? Maybe Christmas can do you some good."



"You asked to see me, sir?" said a gangly young man who had entered into Damon's office. He was visibly shaking, having been abruptly called to see the head man in the office. He hadn't even spoken to him before, and now here he was one on one with his rich and powerful boss.

"Hmmm... Larson is it?" Damon said, tapping a pencil eraser to his lips. "You're the new intern, am I right?"

"Yes, sir. Chip. Chip Larson."

"Mmmm-hmmm..." Damon squinted his eyes as he evaluated the young man. "I bet you look good in a dress."

"Uh, I uh... Is that..." The young man stumbled for words. "I... Don't know why... Are you asking me?"

"You've never put one on? Not even for laughs?" Damon asked.

"I don't know what this has to do with my job..."

"Internship," Damon corrected. "You don't have a job here, per se, and not really subject to the usual rules about inappropriate behavior."

"Maybe I should go," Chip said.

"And give up 200,000 dollars?"

"Excuse me?"

"Chip, I have a proposal for you. If you accept, I'll give you 200,000 dollars — and I can get you on here full time. How does that sound to you?"

"Well," Chip couldn't help but smile. "Who do I have to kill?"

"Oh, no. Nothing like that. In fact, It's a vacation. Literally. A month long vacation."

This was the perfect solution for Damon. He'd satisfy his nagging mother and nosy family enough that he had a real girlfriend and was spending time with the family, all while staying out of the office like he had been forced to.

"Is this something that's... Legal?"

"Essentially," Damon said. "So if you agree, I need you to sign something."

"Agree to what?"

"Well, I can't tell you until you sign."

"How do I know what I'm signing?"

"You don't." He pushed a sheet of paper across his desk to meet the unsure young man. "200,000 dollars might be worth the risk."

After contemplating it for a few moments, Chip picked up the paper.

"Do you need a pen?" Damon asked.

"I have one," Chip took a pen from his pocket and signed his name. "So what did I just sign?"

"Non-disclosure agreement. I can't have you repeating what I'm about to tell you." He took the paper back, carefully folded it in thirds and placed it in a desk drawer.

"Just an NDA?"

"And a few other things," the imposing older man said. He stood up and walked around to the corner of his desk and sat on it. "Now, the first thing we need to do is to get you to a friend of mine for a fitting..."

"Could you tell me what the heck this is all about first?"

"Right," Damon said, gathering himself for a moment. "Well, I've been asked to take some time off. I've decided that my best course of action is to head back home. I owe my family some time, and I'm very eager to get them to stop pestering me. If I give them a month, we'll be so sick of each other, I won't have to go back for years."



"So you're going home for Christmas?"

"Yes. However... I kind of... Put myself in the corner a bit. I claimed I had a girlfriend, and... I don't. So I need one for the trip."

Chip was waiting for the follow-up to that sentence, the part where his boss explained what he was going to do to come up with a girlfriend, when he came to a sudden realization.

"No," he said. "You don't think... That..."

"For 200,000 dollars, a paid vacation and a new job, it really isn't that much to ask, if you think about it."

"I mean... I don't..." Chip looked around, as if there was going to be someone in the area he could appeal to, to verify how bizarre this request was. "I'm a man."

"Exactly." Damon took a breath and then slapped his leg. "Chip, I don't deal with women very well. I have... Issues."

"Issues?"

"Issues with self-control. I haven't had a serious relationship for fifteen years. I don't think... being in the company of a desirable, attractive woman... is healthy for me. Or her, for that matter."

Chip was trying to calculate everything, but he wasn't fast enough for Damon's patience. "So..."

"So I need someone I won't be tempted by. A man in the place of a woman. It's really the only solution that makes any sense."

"Dude, are you crazy? I'm not doing that!" Chip replied, finally in possession of the facts, and dismayed by every one of them. "I mean, come on!"

"I'd hate to have to write a letter to your college detailing all the things you've been doing wrong here, Chip. They might just cancel your internship and take disciplinary action."

"But I... I'm not doing anything wrong..." Chip then caught on. "You wouldn't. Would you?"

"I give you a choice, Chip. Pretend to be my girlfriend for the next month, or I'll get you thrown out whatever crappy little college internship program you came from."

"No," Chip said, without hesitation. "You're out of your mind. I don't care what happens."

"You'd turn down $200,000 and a job? Just like that?"

"Just like that. And I'm calling the police."

"How about $500,000?"

Chip turned away, afraid of whatever emotion he was about to display would betray him completely. He didn't need his boss to know just how greedy he could get, and how much he desperately wanted this cash. He'd strip naked and run down the street for a hundred bucks, and had done just that several times in college. For half a million he'd do just about anything, and enthusiastically, but he had to play it cool.

"It's more than just the money," he said. "I have family and friends to think about. Places to go, you know, social obligations. I can't disappear for a month."

"A million is as high as I can go, buddy," Damon said. He had no intent of ever paying this money, even though he had more than enough to cover it.

That was as far as Chip could push it. A million dollars. He couldn't risk losing this amazing, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"I'll consider it," Chip said.

"Yes or no. Right now."

"What proof do I have that..."

"Yes or no."

Chip was feeling like the room was spinning. He was going to be a millionaire. That's all his brain could process. The rest of it? He'd deal with that later. Million. Dollars. Money. Rich. Now.

"Yes," Chip said.

Damon stood up again and shook Chip's hand. "Good man," he said. "Now, let's get some boobs on you."



Chip leapt out of his shoes when the pleasant little chime above the door went off. This was the most nervous he'd ever been. He had arrived at the "2Femme4U Makeover Services" salon, a place that offered male-to-female makeovers. He'd found the name of the place in a sketchy forum online, but it seemed to be a pretty straightforward business. It was in a strip mall in San Bernardino, right out in the open.

Damon had left the details of Chip's transition up to him to do on his own. He was free to do whatever he needed to do to impersonate a woman, but he only had a few days to do it. Getting professional help seemed like the only thing the young man could do with so little time.

"How can I help you?" Said a woman at the counter. At least, she was *probably* a woman, Chip thought. Almost for sure. Then he noticed she was well over six feet tall.

"Hi, I'm... Here for... Uh, a makeover, I guess?" Chip said, sounding unsure. He knew that was exactly why he was here, but he still couldn't believe he was actually asking for it. "Unless you're busy, I can come back."

"You're Mr. Smith?"

"That's me?" Chip Larson said.

"Of course it is!" The woman replied, nonplussed. "Follow me behind the curtain, if you would," she instructed. "Excited?"

"Oh. Yeah. Sure. So excited."

"Don't worry, hun. We've all had our first time." She held the mauve-colored curtain for Chip to walk through, and it felt like a metaphor of some sort.

Behind the curtain were no mysteries, just racks of dresses, a salon chair and a wall of wigs. It smelled like lavender and bleach.

"I'm Lexi, by the way. I'll be supervising your makeover." She stretched her tall body past another curtain and stuck her head through it. "Mikki! Customer!" She shouted. "Mikki is our stylist," Lexi explained to Chip. She clasped her hands together. "Now, do you have a femme name?"

"Holly?" Chip said. He checked his notes on his phone. "Yeah. Holly."

He had been sent a short biography of "Holly Garland" the name Damon had made up for his fake girlfriend and given to his family. She was in her late twenties, grew up in Los Angeles, and was head over heels in love with Damon. It wasn't much to go on, but in a way, he was grateful for that.

"Cute!" Lexi said with a smile. "And it suspiciously fits with the holidays!"

"Yeah, I guess it does. Hey, I think I left something in the car? No! At home. I'll be right back."

The experienced TG makeover clerk, held onto Chip's belt to keep him from escaping. "Mikki!" Lexi called out again, louder.

A slam of a metal door was heard. "What's your damage? I was on a break!" Yelled a raspy voice. "I could her your bleating from..."

Mikki walked through the curtain with a cigarette dangling from her lips, and looked at Chip in mild shock.

"Who's this?" She asked Lexi.

"A customer," Lexi replied in a muted, frustrated voice. "Your ten o'clock."

"I have a ten o'clock?" Mikki replied. She checked a very blank calendar behind her. "Holy shit."

"I'm going to leave you in Mikki's capable hands..." Lexi said to Chip, giving her co-worker a very stern expression. "But I'll be back soon to check in, okay?"

Now alone with the stylist, Chip was feeling even more nervous than when he arrived.

"So get your butt in the chair," Mikki said, walking to her supplies. She had every possible beauty item on an overcrowded table, and began to rummage though them. "What name do you want me to use? Want me to use your girl name? Most usually do."

"Holly," Chip said. He definitely didn't want to leave his real name, and he needed to get used to people calling him 'Holly.'

"Yeah, figures," Mikki said. "So what're you looking for? Night on the town? Sissy adventures? S&M? Fifties housewife? What'cha into?"

"I should go," Chip said, getting up.

Mikki pushed him back down in the seat. "Sit your ass down. You think you're the first nervous client I've had? Besides, no refunds."

"I really do need to..."

"You need to sit down and take it like a man, okay?" She blocked any further attempts to escape. "Now what's the look you want?"

Chip fidgeted for a few moments before resigning himself to his situation. He went back to his phone. "I need to look like this." He displayed one of the dozen or so photos Damon had sent to his family, which he must have copied from some poor girl's instagram feed. She was a fresh-faced and blonde, with a nice smile and a great taste in clothes, looking simple yet elegant.

"Like, this, huh? That's a new fetish." Mikki took the phone to compare the photo with Chip's face. "I mean, we can get close. She's got an entirely different bone structure."

"I need to look *just* like her."

"Not sure that's something we can do here, princess."

"It's really important. it doesn't matter what it costs."

"All right, I know what to do. I'm gonna have to call in some outside help on this one." She gave Chip his phone back. "There's a clinic down the way. I know one of the nurses there, and we call them in for the... *Extreme* stuff... If you know what I mean. Fillers and that kind of thing. But it's not cheap."

"I understand. I'll pay whatever it costs." For a million dollars, it was a relatively thrifty investment. "Wait a minute. Are you talking needles?"

Vikki saw it coming and rested her knee on Chip's lap. "Stay," she commanded. "You want to look like this girl or not?"

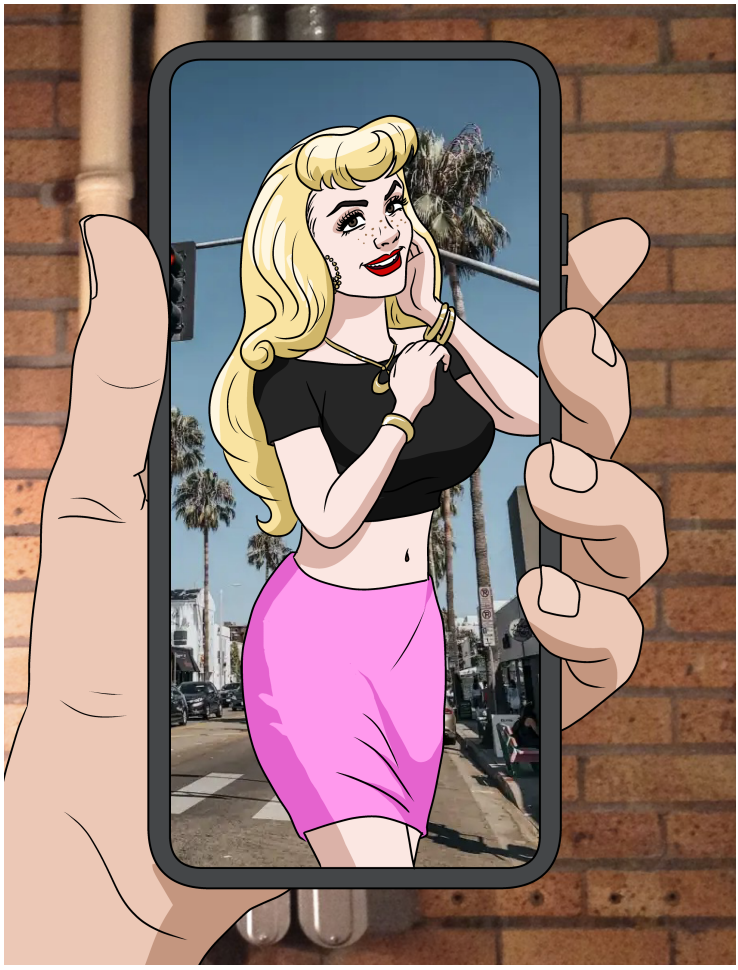
He didn't like needles, and never had. Combined with the general creepiness of this entire escapade, he wanted out. He wanted out of this whole arrangement.

"You gonna be good? Or do I gotta tie you down? Because I've done that before. I'm very good with knots."

"Fine," Chip said, feeling a drip of sweat come down his brow.

"All righty then!" Mikki said. "Let me make a call. Meanwhile, take a look at what we got around here. Pick out some dresses and wigs you like."

Chip gulped. This was the moment. He was actually going through with this. He was really going to dress up like a woman for the next month, and the full force of that reality — and the terror that came with it — was only hitting him just now.



As Mikki talked on her cell phone, Chip got up and walked over to the many, many racks of glitzy, shiny clothes that were meant for various kinks. He had to keep looking and looking, but eventually he found some items that were along the "simple and elegant" look he was going for.

He approached the wall of styrofoam heads with wigs on them, but as he did, Mikki waved him off. "Y'know what? Forget the wigs for now," she said, as she covered the phone for a moment. She opened a drawer and picked out a black boned corset and tossed it at him. "Get started with this, okay?" She pointed to a changing booth, then returned to her call.

Chip held the corset, knowing perfectly well what it was, but unconvinced such a small thing could fit around his waist. He got his shirt off and gave it go, only just able to get it on at maximum expansion.

Finally, Mikki was done and came over to help. "It's a bitch, 'aint it?" She said, peering into the booth. "Hey Lexi!" She yelled. "Give us a hand in here!"

With the two of them pulling on the laces, Mikki and Lexi (mostly Lexi) got it tight around Chip's midsection, cutting him in half and killing him in the process. However, his condition quickly improved and he leaned against the wall, trying desperately to find some kind of air to fill his constricted lungs.

Lexi cracked her knuckles. "That's my favorite part," she said with a smile and then returned to the front of the small store.

"Keep tightening it, too. In a week or so, you can get it down another three or four inches."

"This is fine..." Chip said in a whisper.

"Okay, sports fans," said Mikki. "Next is the gaff, to flatten out that package you're smuggling in your pants. Now, I'm going to give you a page of instructions with helpful illustrations on how to do it, and that's all the help you're getting from me, you copy?" She was very serious. "I'm not helping you beyond that. I'm not paid enough."

She handed Chip a flesh-colored jockstrap-like garment with a sheet of steps. "Has this been washed?" He asked.

"At some point, sure," Mikki responded. "Get going, Tanya is going to be here in twenty to do your fillers on her lunch break." She pointed to the booth again.

The gaff was far less painful than the corset, but wearing it felt as awkward as a garment could make a man feel. He had to admit it did what it claimed to do, and with a pair of panties on, there was little to no trace of his manhood.

Oh, and he was also wearing a pair of panties. Not a particularly fancy pair, just ones that were meant for men, with padding to add curves to his angular butt.

Turning to the full-length mirror in the booth, he saw someone in between male and female. He had hips and a flat crotch, but no chest and hair all over. It was sort of like someone who had assembled a human in the dark.

"Ya done yet?" Mikki yelled.

Chip whimpered in dismay at his bizarre reflection.

"What was that?"

"Uh-huh," Chip replied.

"Well, come on out and share your beauty with the world," Mikki said, dryly.

Chip did just that, taking what were quite possibly the most timid steps he'd taken since he was learning to walk.

"Yeah, that's about what I was expecting," Mikki said. "God, you're so skinny. Girls like you can wear anything."

Chip looked down at himself again, curious to verify her comment. He was having trouble visualizing it.

"It'll look better when we're done," the woman said, reading Chip's mind. "Next step is to pick a good breast size for you. I think we'll start with a DD-cup and work our way down from that." She went over to a stack of plastic bins with "A," "B," "C," "D," "DD," "E," "EE" and "Grand Tetons" written on them.

The wigs caught Chip's attention again. "Why didn't you want me to pick a wig?"

"Well, if I'm not wrong, this isn't a one-night thing, am I right?"

"I have to keep this up for a month," Chip said, dejectedly.

"A month? Wow. Anyway, for sure you're gonna need a long-term solution, and that's going to be fusing extensions to your hair. It'll look natural, it can be cared for like regular hair, and there's no seam to cover up." She grinned. "Plus you can wake up looking perfectly female, with no one the wiser, wink-wink, nudge-nudge."

In short order, Mikki found a DD-cup bra and helped Chip try it on, slipping in some gel forms to fill it out. That was quickly rejected, due to it looking hilarious, and then they tried a D cup. But in true Goldilocks fashion, it was the smallest option, the C-cup, which both seemed pleased with.

"Lookin' good, cupcake. Now try the dress."

Chip had picked out a simple navy blue shirtwaist dress-type thing, but made of thicker flannel-like material.

"Good, I was wonderin' if I'd ever get rid of that piece of crap shirtwaist..." Mikki corrected herself. "It looks great on you, though!"

A loud banging came from the metal door at the very back. "That'll be Tanya. Get in the chair, all right?"

After introductions, Tanya, dressed in her clinic scrubs and wearing very thick glasses, examined the photos Chip provided of what he needed to look like.

"Is this gonna hurt?" He asked

"He's a brave one, isn't he?" Mikki commented to Tanya.

"It may pinch a little," the nurse answered Chip.

The nurse then examined Chip's face, using her practiced rubber-gloved hands. He much preferred Tanya's clinical term of performing "face contouring" to Mikki's "Shootin' goop into yer face."

The needle itself looked like it was designed to tranquilize a rhinoceros, with a needle bigger than a pencil. Chip whimpered again.

Inside of about fifteen minutes, the intern had a new, higher set of cheekbones, fuller lips and the bump in his nose had been smoothed out.

"I figger that's as close as we're gonna get," Mikki said, comparing Chip's face to the photos.



"It's not perfect, but you'd have to really compare the two to notice," Tanya agreed.

When Chip looked for himself, all he could see was redness and grossly swollen parts of his face.

"It'll go down over the next few hours," Tanya explained. "You can try an ice pack if it doesn't go away fast enough."

Chip paid the nurse out of pocket, sending $1500 to her bank account. She reminded him that she was never there, and left quickly after fist-bumping Mikki.

"While we're waiting on that," Mikki said, "we need to get started on the hair extensions. That'll take three or four hours."

"That long?"

"Humans have a hundred thousand hairs on their head, and I've got to fuse at least five percent of those. So sit still and get comfortable."

Two hours later, Mikki abruptly declared herself on a break and left, so Lexi came in and told Chip everything "looked like it was going great" and said that no one would even notice the horrible red swollen features of his face.

Explaining that Mikki was probably going to be about forty-five minutes on "break" she gave him a box of press-on nails to affix by himself to keep him busy.

Mikki returned, smelling of cigarettes and beer and got right back to work. "Hey, I forgot to ask, you wanted to be a blonde, right? Cuz I already did that."

Chip couldn't help but turn to look at his reflection and see his hair had been bleached and dyed a whole new color. "Oh God," he said.

"I knew you'd like it. Matches that photo of yours perfectly. Kinda."



Chip began to shiver uncontrollably, a natural reaction to having been changed into a different looking person for a crazy multi-millionaire boss to pass as his girlfriend for several weeks.

"Whoa there, hun," Mikki said. "Can't have you falling all to pieces on me. You want a beer?"

"N-n-n-n-no..." Chip replied.

"No one ever takes the beer," Mikki said, dejectedly. "Just think of baseball or something, okay? That'll take your mind off things. Remember it's just a disguise and you're gonna be okay."

"I have to pee," Chip said.

"Yeah, not in that gaff thing."

"What?"

"It takes like ten minutes to undo and fifteen more to re-do. You gotta pick your moments. Besides, holding in your pee is just another part of the feminine experience."

About an hour later, Mikki finally finished her work, and dropped herself down in a nearby chair. "That was one son of a bey-otch," she said, going limp. "Hey Lexi!" She yelled.

"Are we all done in here?" Lexi said, returning from the front of the store. As soon as she saw Chip, she froze in her tracks. "Oh, Mikki, you've outdone yourself! I have to take pictures!"

"No pictures!" Chip said, alarmed.

"We're very discreet," Lexi replied. She got her phone out and started taking some snaps of the transformed man as he cringed. Then she stopped. "We haven't even tried heels yet!" She said, appalled. Lexi marched over to a cabinet that was packed with heels of all kinds.

"We don't really need to..." Chip said.

"Don't need to? What self-respecting gender-bent woman doesn't wear high heels at the very first opportunity?"

"But..."

"Don't fight it, dude," Mikki said, still limp in her chair.

"Size 7 mens, right?" Lexi asked. "And how high a heel are you comfortable in?"

"I really don't know."

"All right, we'll start you off in a modest four-inch heel." She carried a pair of basic black opera pumps back to Chip and lifted his feet for him as she put them on.

They sure didn't look modest to the terrified young man in the dress, bur soon enough, he was helped to his feet. He got the distinct feeling that Lexi was having way more fun with this than was healthy.

"Okay, now, short steps, heel-to-toe, and..." Before Lexi could even finish her sentence, Chip was falling over on his side and nearly taking a tumble.

"So let's try three inches," Lexi said as she helped a wobbly Chip back to the salon chair. A minute later, Chip was grabbing for the curtain to keep himself up as he tried to walk in the shorter heels.

He tried the two inch heels next, then one and a half inch heels, then 1-inch heels, then kitten heels and finally, he was back in the sneakers he came in. He tripped in those, too.

"I've never met anyone who couldn't handle heels," Lexi said, baffled by his inability to walk in anything.

"I'm kind of clumsy," Chip explained.

Lexi looked almost angry with Chip, unable to enjoy the first steps of a transformed man in high heels, one of the true joys of her job. She looked him over from head to toe, and noted his hairy legs. "Mikki, give him a wax," she said.

"Wax?" He asked as Lexi left, looking very displeased. Then he realized what she meant. *"Wax?"* He said to Mikki.

"It'll only hurt for a moment," Mikki said.

Chip was laid out on the fully-reclined salon chair as wax was slathered onto his legs, which at first he found relaxing and comforting. It seemed impossible to imagine that it might hurt all that much, but one swift yank from Mikki erased that notion completely, and made him regret being born. His high-pitch shriek was the most ladylike thing he had done all day.

Mikki picked up the bottles that had been knocked off her table from the sound waves coming from Chip's scream, and then proceeded on with her task. After twenty or so rips of wax and twenty blood-curdling screams, she was half

done. So after another twenty yanks, Chip was rewarded with smooth, shiny, beet-red legs.

"You might get lucky and not have to re-do that until your month is up," Mikki said. "Of course if you do, you can come right back here..."

"No!" Chip said. "I'll be fine. Thank God that's over."

"Okay, well, that means we're onto the last step of the big girly makeover, and that's your face." She added another cake of wax to the heated pot she had been using.

Chip looked at the new wax and then at Mikki, then back at the wax, then again at Mikki.

"Well, I can pluck the facial hairs out one by one, if you'd prefer that..."

By the time Mikki finally put the terrifying wax pot away, Chip had smooth legs, a pair of thin eyebrows, a very smooth chin, and trauma that would last a lifetime.

Mikki did his face up, at first a bit strong for Chip's tastes. "I look like..."

"Yeah, sorry, I'm used to a certain type of client, not this simple and elegant look," Mikki said to apologize. "Let's start over, looking more like the little more girl next door instead of the RuPaul next door."

On the second go, Mikki narrated what she was doing and did one side of his face, while she taught Chip how to do it for himself on the other side of his face. He was reluctantly thankful for the lessons, as he knew — much to his dread — that he'd need to know this in the days and weeks ahead.

When Lexi was called back in, she gushed at Chip's appearance, even before he was able to see for himself. "It's like you're a whole new person!" Lexi said. She pulled him up from his chair and led him to a full-length mirror. "Finally, a woman at last!"

"At-at-at last..." Chip said, as he turned to see his full transformation laid out in front of him. What he saw was jarring. He didn't see much of himself looking back at him. Even his own eyes seemed unfamiliar, behind the mascara and eyeliner.

His body looked, for the first time in his memory, normal. He wasn't skinny and lanky as he had always seen himself. He was properly shaped and sized, but as a woman would be. What was skinny for a man was fit for a woman, and he was unprepared to see a normal looking person in his reflection.

That revelation was being twisted in his mind, as he looked normal, but at the same time, looked like a woman. A well-shaped, well-proportioned and feminine woman. It was like he was inside someone else's body.

The long, blonde hair that was cascading from his scalp was so strange, he had to fight the urge to try and yank it off, like a parasite that had latched onto him. It was shiny, thick and almost glowed with light. The golden color changed the

entire complexion of his skin. Previously a bit pale, that same skin now looked healthier when framed by the lighter hair.

His face was no longer swollen and red, and with the makeup, looked pleasingly delicate and attractively presented. His lips were thick and luscious, his eyes dark and mysterious, his brows thin and curious.

He wasn't going to win any beauty contests, but at the same time, he looked nice enough to get asked for a phone number or a dance at the disco. Chip could easily see this woman walking down the street and catching the glances of every man around, and the occasional wolf-whistle.

"Welcome to the world, Holly!" Lexi said, bubbling over with enthusiasm, hugging him.

"Let them breathe, okay Lexi?" Mikki admonished her colleague. "Don't smother them."

"Sorry, I get so excited!" Lexi said, shaking her fists like maracas. She pulled out her phone to take more photos. "It's a dream come true, isn't it?" She asked as she snapped away.

"Sure, yeah..." Chip replied, trying to look happy with his transformation, instead of scared out of his sneakers. "Yaaay..." He added.

"Hey, I gotta bus to catch," Mikki told him as she put on a jacket. "We and some of our regulars have a get-together every Friday night to go club-hopping en femme. You know, for support and protection and stuff. You're welcome to come."

"You're a man?" Chip asked shocked.

Mikki shrugged. "If you wanna use that word, sure." She took a step back for one last look at her new work of art and gave an uncharacteristic smile. "You turned out well, girlie. See you around, okay?"

"Sure..." Chip answered, only now becoming aware of how deep this whole feminization escapade went. If Mikki could fool him all day, could he fool others as Holly?

Even if he didn't really want to?

"Yeah, I guess it's time to lock up for the night," Lexi said, retreating to the front counter. "I have the receipt when you're ready, hot stuff."

The faux woman who left the 2Femme4U shop had two bags with him, one filled with the padding, makeup and hair care products that would be used in the days ahead of him, and a bag full of his male clothes he had arrived in — a product of days gone by.

As he loaded his tiny little car, he resolved to be the very best driver there ever was for his trip home. There was no way he was going to get stopped looking like he did now.


2 femme 4U
2 femme 4U
2 femme 4U

"Merry Christmas, Holly Garland!" Lexi said to Chip as she locked the door of her shop.



"You fuckin' shit stain! You need to get ready!" Damon yelled at Chip, who had just woken up.

Damon had appeared at the door of his meager apartment, unannounced and angry. It had only been a day since his makeover, but most of it had worn off on him, and even his perfect hair was now scraggly and unkempt. He just hadn't had the courage to keep it looking nice, and in a way let it get out of sorts as away to convince himself that he was still himself.

Chip's boss roughly pushed him aside to enter into his place, kicking aside the clutter Chip had let fall to his floor since last time he'd cleaned. "Well? Get dressed!"

"What?" Chip answered, fighting a yawn. "How did you know here I lived?"

"What, you think Spencer Liszt Associates doesn't have your address?" He grabbed Chip by the shoulder to get him moving. "So get dressed up. Show what the fuck you look like as a woman."

"Now?"

"Yeah, now! How much fucking time do you think I have? Get going!"

"This takes, like, an hour."

"Already acting like a cunt," Damon complained. "You have ten minutes. Go." He then shoved Chip into the his bedroom.

"What the fuck, dude?"

"A million dollars isn't just going to be just handed to you, you lazy fucking millennial!" Damon shouted. "You gotta earn it! And that's only if I approve of what you look like. I'm gonna go get coffee and when I get back, I expect you to show me what you got, okay? Fuckin' kid." He then stormed out of the apartment, not even bothering to shut the door behind him.

When Damon returned, eight minutes later, he had a single coffee and was looking even more impatient. "Well?"

"I'm still working on it!" Chip replied as he let Damon in. "It takes more than ten minutes."

"Jesus fucking christ," Damon mumbled. "You look like a mess."

"I just got started," he said. He was dressed in the padded panty and had the gel-filled bra on, with his long hair covering half of his face. "It's gonna take however long it takes." He then returned to his bedroom and closed the door.

Damon looked around for a place to sit, appalled at how filthy everything looked. "I should pay my people more," he said to himself. "Nah. Fuck 'em." He got his phone out and started replying to emails.

Twenty minutes later, Chip was ready. Actually, he had been ready for about five minutes, but he took a while to calm his nerves and tell himself this was all going to be worth it, in the end.

"Okay," he said as he emerged from his bedroom in the same dress he had picked out at the makeover store. "Here's what we came up with."

"Why the fuck are you wearing sneakers?" Damon asked. "Forget that. You should have bigger tits."

"What about my face?"

"What about it?"

"Is it okay?"

Damon looked in closer, like he was appraising the finish on a new car. He got his phone to compare Chip with the "Holly Garland" photos he had collected. He took his time before answering. "You don't really look like her."

"Well, I'm never going to look *exactly* like this woman..."

"Her teeth are whiter, she's got freckles, her nose is smaller, and she's got a slimmer jaw."

"Is it going to work?"

"I don't suppose I have much of a choice," Damon replied. "You can wear a Covid mask. That'll help."

That was as much praise as he was going to get, Chip figured.

"So is it okay?"

"Yeah, this is what we got, so we'll just have to fake it." Damon headed for the door. He opened it, and started to leave. "Well?" He asked.

"Well what?" Chip replied.

"We're going."

"Going where?"

"To my mother's place. Like I told you. Let's go."

"Now?" Chip replied. "Just... Right now?"

"Why the fuck did you think I came here? It's time to go."

"I need to... Get ready..."

"What, and pack your clothes? You haven't got a fuckin' thing. You're not brining any of your regular stuff, fucknut."

"I got a *few* things..."

"Just throw them in a bag and get moving. The Gulfstream is should be just burning fuel on the runway by now." He looked at his watch. "And we're getting picked up when we land, and I can't keep them fuckin' waiting. So get your shit together."

"Uh... Uh... Oh man..." Chip started to fly around his apartment looking for things. He did have a few items from the 2Femme4U salon that he needed to take with him, unless he wanted to be wearing the same shaping garments for a month. He also need his makeup and hair stuff.

"Come the fuck on, man! Let's go!" Damon yelled when Chip's preparation for a month away passed the twenty second mark. "What the fuck is taking so long? We got a plane waiting!"



The sign that whipped by the car read "Welcome to Chestnut Cove, The Original Christmas Town of Eastern Vermont." Chip barely caught it.

It was the second hour of the flight when Chip was brave enough to ask where "home" was, exactly. Hidden in the profanity-laden insults Damon hauled at him, Chip learned that he had grown up in a small Vermont town. The plane landed in Montpelier, and waiting for him was a man named Ward Spencer.

"Perty, ain't it?" Ward said from the driver's seat of the 2001 Subaru he was driving. "Never get tired of coming back to this old town."

Despite Chip shivering in the back seat, his knees knocking and teeth clattering, he had to admit it was a nice little town. Even the words "cozy" and "quaint" couldn't even begin to cover how homey the town felt.

There were twinkling lights strung from the lampposts and wrapped around trees, wreaths on doors, poinsettias in every window, ornaments hung from the fir trees, and snowmen were smiling on every lawn. Golden tinsel, silver bells, red ribbons and pinecones were assembled into displays, with a foot of white snow on the ground and even thicker on every roof. Warm, inviting light came from inside the tiny homes refracted by icicles and frost in the windows.

It was a bit much, to be honest, thought Chip.

Chestnut Cove was also the diametric opposite of Damon, a hard-charging, driven man who specialized in making ad campaigns for sleek, ultra-modern cars and minimalistic modern clothing brands and had no time for embellishments and fanciful decor. Damon was man apparently without sentimentality, and this entire town was formed out of pure, undiluted sentiment.

"You okay back there, li'l lady?" Ward asked Chip.

"She'll be fine," Damon said from the front seat. "She's a hearty kind of girl."

Ward Spencer was married to Damon's mother, and had been since Damon lost his father at age 15. He'd passed away from a stroke, and his mother had remarried less than a year later, much to the son's disapproval. He'd only spent a couple of years living with Ward, and moved out to go to Yale as soon as he could, grateful to leave this passive-aggressive home-spun folksiness behind for good.

"Shame about the throat," Ward said looking back in the rear view mirror. Chip was wearing a medical mask, that served to hide his features, which didn't quite match the girl he was supposed to be. Damon had grown more and more anxious about Chip's appearance, buying the thickest one when they landed at a gift shop. He assured Chip that after a week or so of being known as "Holly Garland," no one would worry about any slight differences between the photos and Chip when he took the mask off.

The other garment Damon had bought for Chip was a warm scarf wrapped around his neck. Both implied he was sick, and helped excuse his lack of talking, which would have been hard to explain with a male voice coming out of a female body.

"She's perfectly fine. She just can't talk for a while," Damon replied.

"Probably the first time you've gotten a word in edgewise!" Ward said with a laugh and slapping his step-son on the leg.

"Yeah," Damon replied, cooly. "Sure is."

"And don't worry, we'll get you in some warm clothes, too," he said to Chip. "I think you're about Trudy's size."

The excuse for arriving without a stitch of clothing was that they "lost her luggage" despite being on a private plane where that kind of thing is virtually impossible. Ward bought the explanation anyway.

"You know you're wasting your life out there in L.A.," Ward said his step-son. "They just don't have heart out there. No one appreciates an honest day's work. Just a lot of tofu and plastic surgery. They think that..."

Damon cut him off. "I live there, Ward. I know what they think. I've lived there for twenty five years."

"Never understood why you moved out there in the first place," Ward replied. "For as long as I live..."

"I moved out there to get away from this sh... little town." Damon pulled back on the expletive. "Jesus, it makes me sick to my stomach. This is a prison, this town. No one ever leaves. People so wrapped up in their own little Hallmark fantasies about Christmas and small town living that they never even try to make something of themselves. I have one life to live, Ward, and I'm not wasting it in this cheaply-decorated toilet of a town!"

Ward gave him a look, then slapped him on the thigh again. "Ha! Same ol' Damon!" He looked back at Chip. "This one's a firecracker, let me tell you!"

Chip gave an obligatory nod back in acknowledgment, and then returned his attention to the scenes outside. It was kind of scary, how much this town was into Christmas. Every possible display of Christmas spirit was visible in every place Chip looked. It looked more and more like the product of some kind of madness, more than a good-natured cheerfulness. It was just everywhere.

Damon must have recognized the look of distress in Chip's expression, be cause he smirked when looking back at him, as if to say "It's nuts, isn't it?"

Chip's wide-eyed return expression was his silent agreement.

"This crazy Christmas thing really took over the whole town," Damon said to Ward.

"Has it?" Ward replied, blind to the obvious.

"It was never this bad when I lived here."

"Well, tourism," Ward replied. It was his only insight. "Say, the Coopers are selling their Christmas souvenir shop — you know, the one past the grocery store. I told them I'd see if a big-time businessman like yourself might look into making an investment."

Damon couldn't have been more dismissive. "Yeah, well you can tell them you asked."

The car finally made it to it's destination, the small family home Damon grew up in, and crawled its' way up the driveway with freshly fallen snow popping under the tires.

It was a modest home, a bit larger than other houses on the street, but not in the least bit fancy. In a lot of ways, it was indistinguishable from any house in the area.

There were elaborate displays of Christmas on the snowy front lawn, ribbons and greenery festooning the small porch and mailbox. Gold ornaments hung off the trees, warm candlelight was flickering inside, and gentle puffs of white smoke were coming from the chimney.

"Well there he is, my wandering boy come home at last!" Said an old woman, who approached Damon as he came across the threshold.

"Hi, Mom," Damon replied, as he stood still, ready to withstand the onslaught of attention that was certainly coming his way.

His mother cradled his face first before enveloping him in a hug, planting her head on his shoulder. "Oh, why do you wait so long to visit your poor old mother?" She then backed away, but kept her hands on his arms. "At least I have you for the whole month," she said with a warm smile on her wrinkled lips.

Her name was Helen and she was nearly 70, as Damon had explained to Chip on the flight. He described her as, in his words, "deceptively cordial." She was wearing a flower-print dress in maroon covered by a white apron, draped over a pudgy, elderly body. Her swollen ankles told a story of a lifetime in high heels, and was still wearing a pair.

"And this must be Holly!" She said, turning her attention to Chip. She opened her arms wide as she approached, smothering Chip with love and also smothering his cheek with a sloppy grandma kiss. "Oh, you're adorable! Now what are you doing dressed like that in this weather?"

"She's not able to talk," Damon said.

"She's a Mute?" Mrs. Spencer asked.

"No, she's just got a problem with her throat," Damon clarified, rolling his eyes.

"The poor dear!" The old woman went to her stove. "No wonder, dressed like it was spring break! A little chicken soup will help that."

"You should say hello to your sisters," Ward said, escorting Damon through a side door and into the living room. Chip followed, as he had nowhere else to go.

"Well, well, Mr. big-shot is finally here," said one of the two women seated on a couch, wrapping gifts.

"I knew you'd come crawling back home," said the other.

"Hello Trudy, Paula," Damon said with his jaw clenched.

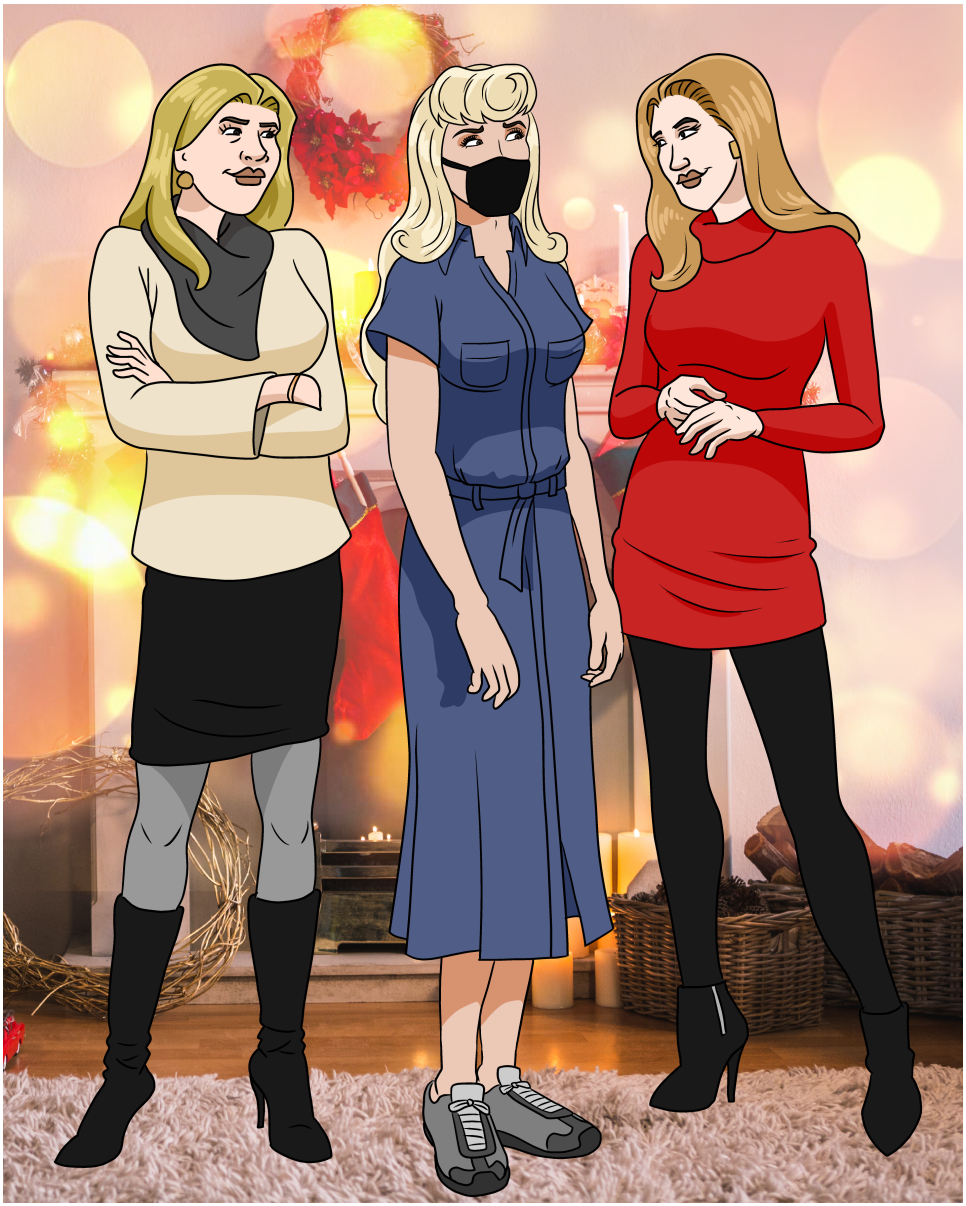
Trudy and Paula Spencer, his sisters, were born five years apart, but they were just about as inseparable as if the were twins. At 29 and 34, respectively, they were still single and to Damon it was no surprise as to why. They were horrible shrews.

Growing up in this house with two younger sisters who were seemingly born to this Earth only to make trouble for him made Damon feel like he had been cursed by some ancient old country gypsy. Leaving Chestnut Cove was made even easier by knowing he'd have these two out of his life, and there were many nights he spent in his bungalow in the L.A. hills that he thanked fate for delivering him from these harpies.

Their snide and condescending attitude wasn't lost on Chip, either. Even as they were dressed in nice holiday outfits, and had obviously just had their hair done, they were like cruel stepsisters from a Disney movie.

"Is this your new victim, Dame?" Paula asked her brother. "Poor thing doesn't even have a clue as to what's in store for her, I bet."

"Don't worry, sweetie, there's a whole support group of girls who have been dumped and disposed of by Damon," Trudy added.



"Good to see you two haven't changed much at all — except being much older," Damon retorted.

"What's it been, five years?" Trudy asked rhetorically. "I guess we're no longer *persona non grata,* Paula."

"Yay for us," Paula responded, sarcastically.

"Trudy," Ward said, interjecting himself. "Poor Holly here lost her bags in transit and I was hoping you might have something she could wear."

"Of course!" Trudy said, getting up onto her high-heeled boots. "I'll go fetch a few things at home. Then we can all go shopping tomorrow for a new wardrobe and get all the juicy details about Damon's doomed relationship."

"Oh, that'll be fun!" Paula added as she got to her feet as well, she said. The two grabbed their puffy winter coats from a coat rack and headed out. "We'll be right back," she said to Chip, "Trudy lives next door."

The doors closed behind them, letting in a gust of bitterly cold air, which served as an artistic flourish to the ice queen vibes the ladies gave off.

"Yikes," Chip quietly whispered under his breath.

"You have no idea," Damon agreed.

It then occurred to Chip the oddity of his employer's behavior. He was a foul-mouthed tyrant with no fuse, except when it came to his family, apparently. He seemed to be keeping up appearances as a cordial and loving son, even under duress.

"Let's get you set up in the guest room," Ward said, taking control of the conversation.

"Oh, maybe Holly should stay in the coach house," said Mrs. Spencer, calling from the kitchen. She walked into sight, still holding a wooden spoon. "If she's not feeling well, I don't want anything spreading."

"It's not like that..." Damon said, in an effort to keep things from getting out of his control. Then he had second thoughts. "Actually, that's not a bad idea."

Chip gave Damon quite the look, but let himself be led along the hallway.

Ward took them outside, Chip bracing himself for the cold. Fortunately the destination was just ten feet away, a small converted garage that was now a cottage of sorts.

It was clear it had been well-maintained, and the heater inside quickly filled the small interior with heat. It was very small, however, but had a full bathroom and a very inviting bed.

"I think this'll be fine," Damon said.

"Good, good. I'll get some fresh bedding," Ward replied, leaving for the house.

As soon as the door closed, Chip needed answers.

"What? Why..."

"It's perfect. You get privacy, and we don't have to sleep together."

"But I don't want to be on my own! I hardly know anything about your family and I need you to cover for me!"

"You'll be fine. You can take it easy and not have to keep up the act all the time."

"This is getting too complicated already."

"Well, what the fuck did you think was going to happen?" He checked out the window of the door to make sure they were okay to keep talking. "You can't stay in the same house and avoid talking to them. Just cool your shit and rest up."

"Dude, I'm not going to let you push me around, okay? I'm just here to be seen as your girlfriend, not to go shopping, put on an act, be nice to those awful sisters of yours or do anything else!"

"Look, I don't care what you do to my fucking sisters. Just don't embarrass me and don't piss of my mother! The whole point of you being here is to get her to stop annoying me about my personal life and when I'm going to get married and all that bullshit these peasants worry about around here."

"Just keep it a minimum and don't volunteer me for anything."

"That reminds me, you should use this time to practice a feminine voice. We can't keep up this bad throat excuse for long, and you'll need to sound like a normal woman when you do talk."

"Knock-knock!" Mrs Spencer said, letting herself in. "Here's some nice hot soup for you, sweetie, and Trudy dropped off some clothes she hopes you might like." She wriggled her way inside, past her son, balancing a tray with a bowl of steaming soup on top of some folded clothes. She placed them on a small table. "I'm so worried about that throat of yours."

"How do you think a bowl of soup is gonna help her?" Damon snapped.

"I never met a sickness that didn't run and hide from my homemade chicken soup!" She said with a wag of her finger. "You're so tense, Damon. You need to just let yourself be taken by the Christmas spirit!"

"Fine, fine, whatever," Damon said, frustrated.

"Anyhow, if the soup doesn't work, I called Doc Tinsely and he said he'd give it a look tomorrow."

"She's probably just better resting here."

"I just want her to have the opinion of someone I trust," Mrs. Spencer said, sadly. "I worry so much."

Damon looked at his intern, and even though only his eyes could be seen when wearing the mask, he already knew knew Chip didn't want to go.

"Really, she should just stay here, and if it lingers..."

"I'll have the doctor come out here, then," Mrs. Spencer said. "He's an old friend. If he says everything is all right, I'll sleep so much better."

Damon dropped his shoulders. "Fine, Mom. She can go see him."

The look in Chip's eyes was predictably alarmed.



In the morning, Chip woke in a flannel night dress that had been loaned to him, and looked out through the large picture window of the coach house at the snowy blue and white back yard of the Spencer family home.

It wasn't quite as nice as it was at night, when everything was lit up with amber glows and string lights, but daytime was it's own kind of charming, with everything covered in a thick, comforting white fluffiness.

Chip had never actually seen snow before. The closest he got was the winter wonderland celebration at Disneyland. This was far more captivating and enthralling, and he spent almost an hour looking out over the snow. It was magical. For a moment, he even forgot about what he was supposed to be doing.

After a while, he managed to get out of the cozy bed and into the chilled air. He was still wearing his padded underwear and the gaff, terrified that he'd have to get up in the middle of the night for some kind of emergency. He made sure the door on the bathroom was locked and then shed himself of his underwear and gaff before stepping into the shower.

Managing long hair was something he wasn't used to and got it quite wet before realizing he had to hold it out of the shower stream. He resolved to find a better way to do this next time, but for now, he had to scrub himself clean with only one hand at a time.

At least he only had to do his eyes when it came to makeup, as he'd be wearing the mask all day, so that was one comfort. However, drying his hair and making it behave like he wanted it to was like playing whack a mole. Get one side right, and the other would go all wonky. Comb his bangs to the side, and the ends would frazzle. Finally, he just had to call an end to it and declare it as good as it was going to get.

When he got out of the bathroom, a tray of yogurt and fruit awaited him, which scared him to death. While he had been fussing with his hair, Mrs. Spencer had come in and left him a breakfast, without him even knowing he was mere inches away from being outed. Or maybe he had been discovered and she just ran away in horror?

He looked out the windows and tried to spot Mrs. Spencer, but she was long gone. He sat around for a little while waiting to see if cops showed up or there was any other activity indicating his disguise had been exposed. After a while, he decided to get dressed.

The outfit Trudy had given him was simple, starting with a pair of tight black pants, or maybe these were leggings, if he was correct. With them was a thermal shirt, and a big beige wool sweater to go over it.

The sisters may not be the best people in the world, he resolved, but at least they knew how to dress for the cold. A couple of thick wool socks were includ-

ed, too, although he found it difficult to fit his feet back into his sneakers while wearing them.

With nothing else to do, he ate his breakfast and brought the tray back into the house. If he had been discovered, surely they would have confronted him by now. When he got there, he heard a commotion inside.

"But you just got here!" Damon's mother was saying, from somewhere down a hallway.

Chip followed the noise to find Damon and his mother in the guest room. Damon was packing a suitcase.

"It's a board meeting, and I have to be there," Damon explained.

"Just like that?"

"Yes, just like that! It's an emergency meeting, and if I'm not there..." He then spotted Chip who was standing in the doorway. He got the very real impression Damon was trying to leave without telling him, as he looked momentarily sheepish.

Not allowed to talk, Chip threw up his hands in the universal sign for "what the?"

"Hi, um, honey..." Damon said to him. "This thing came up and..."

Chip tried to gesticulate as hard as he could, looking like an angry mime.

"Look, I know, I know, but you know the deal. Some things can't be postponed or delayed. It'll just be one day, two tops."

Chip continued to flail his arms and hands, and very quickly, Damon grabbed him by the neck and leaned in. "Don't fuck this up or you're dead, asshole," he muttered quietly to Chip.

Then, smiling, Damon simply moved him aside as if he were just a misplaced houseplant and headed down the hallway.

The front door opened and Ward shouted out, "Car's all warmed up!"

"I'm coming!" Damon shouted back.

"I wish you didn't have to go," Mrs. Spencer said as she followed her son down the hallway. "I never get a chance to see you anymore."

"It's okay! I'll be back very soon!" He kissed his mother on the cheek and then headed out the door.

All Chip could do was watch, as he trailed Damon to the doorway, but stopped short, as he didn't want to go outside.

"Have a nice time," Damon said, waving back at Chip.



"A throat problem, you say?" Doctor Tinsley said as he talked to Mrs. Spencer. Chip was sitting on an exam bench, thankful to be still fully dressed, and the doctor had a light to look down his throat.

"She hasn't spoken since she and my son arrived last night, trying to rest her voice," Helen explained. "The only noise I've heard from her was the screaming when Damon had to leave this morning. Screamed like a banshee."

"I see," the doctor said. He was a large man, rotund with a large belly, chubby cheeks and easily in his late sixties. "So some sort of infection?" He asked Chip.

Chip shook his head.

"Blown vocal cords?"

Chip shook his head again.

"Muscle spasm?"

Again, a shook head.

"Perhaps you could write out an answer," the doctor said, sounding frustrated.

Chip picked up his phone and started typing, and the observant doctor crossed his arms. He watched Chip closely, making a funny little expression as he did.

"Helen," the doctor said. "You don't need to be here, Why not come back in an hour or so?"

"Is everything going to be all right?"

"I'm sure it'll be fine."

"Are you trying to get rid of me?"

"Helen, you know I treasure every moment we're together," the doctor sad with a warm, friendly tone. "We have too many years and too many memories. It just may take an hour or two to get to the bottom of this."

"All right, Klaus. I'm trusting you with the health of my future daughter in law. Don't let anything happen to her. I've waited forever for my son to get married, you know."

"I do know, Helen," the doctor replied. He'd been inundated with forwarded messages from Helen, his old high school sweetheart, ever since Damon had started sending pictures of "Holly Garland" to her. She was so happy whenever she talked about her son and his imminent marriage. "I'll give you a call when she's ready to be picked up."

Helen leaned forward to kiss the doctor on the cheek. "You're an angel for doing this, Klaus."

"It's nothing at all," the doctor replied with his round cheeks flush. He lingered as he watched Mrs. Spencer exit the room.

He sighed and then turned his attention back to Chip, who had typed out his response.

"Flu or something question mark," the doctor read aloud. "Well," he said, giving the phone back. "It certainly *could* be serious. Let me give you some antibiotics and I'll run a few tests."

After Chip downed a couple of pills, the small-town doctor, set in his ways, took his time to set up his equipment. He seemed not to be in any kind of a rush.

By the time he was ready, he turned around to see that his patient had fallen asleep.

"About time," he said to himself. The sedatives and hypnotic drugs he had told his patient were antibiotics had finally taken effect. He then slid the equipment back into the closet where it came from, and sat down next to Chip's slumbering frame. "Now, if you think I'm going to let you break my Helen's fragile little heart, you have another thing coming... Sir."

He took his finger and pressed on the Adam's Apple on Chip's throat. Satisfied that it was just as substantial as he thought it was, he undid Chip's waistband and confirmed the gaff underneath.

"I don't know who you are," he said to Chip as he slept. "But my beloved Helen has been waiting her entire adult life for one of her children to get married, just to watch one of her own walk down the aisle, and I'm not going to let you torture the poor woman." She puffed up his chest. "I can't even guess what kind of sick joke or scam you're running, but I won't let it stand!"

He took off his wire-rim glasses and gripped the bridge of his nose. Klaus Tinsley might not have been the man in Helen's life, but that didn't mean he didn't love her with every fiber of his being, and had so for decades.

The old man patted Chip on the shoulder. He knew how much Helen Spencer had wanted marriage for her kids, and how much she had invested herself in the prospect of finally seeing her one last dream come true.

Dr. Tinsley wished he could have been the man to give her the children she deserved instead of those horrible kids who treated her abysmally. Yet, that was not his lot in life. A better man had won her, or at least one that was closer to her heart.

So if he couldn't give her the life she deserved, he could give her the daughter in law she deserved.

He began to whisper into Chip's ear. The disguised young man stirred as if he were dreaming a nightmare.



Chip woke out of what was the best sleep he had had in years, possibly. He was in the back seat of the Subaru again, this time with Mrs. Spencer driving. Trudy and Paula were along as well, gabbing away.

"Well look who's up!" Paula said with a wicked little smirk on her face.

Chip sat up straighter and looked around, seeing himself surrounded by shopping bags. He wasn't sure at all what had happened.

"There's our sleeping beauty," Trudy chimed in.

"At least Sleeping Beauty got her prince. Poor Holly is just going to get Damon," Paula said, sitting next to Chip.

"That's not a fairy tale, it's a prison sentence!" Said Trudy.

"Girls, please," Mrs. Spencer said from the front.

Chip was almost about to speak when he remembered his situation, and instead just looked confused.

"Oh, we went shopping," Trudy said, to try and explain. "We were waiting for you to wake up — and by the way, you snore. Since you need clothes, and since Trudy is basically your size, we picked them out and used her to try them on while you slept in the car. You're going to look like a real native of Chestnut Cove!"

"I think she's wondering why she was sleeping at all," Helen said.

"Yes, Doc Tinsley said you had a reaction to the antibiotics." She giggled, inappropriately. "Nothing to worry about. Just probably your delicate constitution."

"Do you remember Angie Pelletier? She used to faint at least six times a year."

"She's a fainter, that's for sure. I heard she lost a toe."

"I heard that too! I wonder why?"

"Girls, please..." Helen said, exasperated.

"Oh yeah, right," Trudy said. "Doc changed you to a different antibiotic so you should be okay. Said you can probably start talking again in 48 hours or so."

Chip, still clearing his head, was not ready to hear that. He didn't need to be "cured" so soon. How as he supposed to develop a convincing female voice in two days?

More importantly, was he to understand that all these bags were for him? Was expected to wear these things he'd never seen before?

When they got back to the Spencer home, Chip found himself being hustled into the house, almost like he was being caught in a riptide of chatty women.

If he was speaking, he might have just uttered a primordial yell. The incessant, meaningless talking between the three women was driving him insane. They were going on endlessly about diets, schedules, relationships, gossip, where to eat, when to eat, vacation plans, TV shows, high school friends, favorite coffee orders and even their preferred methods of opening canned food. It was driving him crazy, and he had only been with them for fifteen minutes.

"Plz tell me U R coming back now," he texted Damon.

"I'll be back when I'm back," Damon answered.

"You girls all excited for the Christmas Barn Dance?" Ward said as he came up from the basement and into the kitchen. "I almost forgot it was that time of year again. I know how you girls go all out every year for it."

"Oh yes!" Helen said, getting energized. "It's this weekend, right after the parade. I need to know what they want for the food."

"Oh my God, Trudes, we're going to need new outfits!" Trudy said to Paula.

"Yes, oh, yes!" Paula added. "I have tons of ideas. I'm going to get so many dances this year!"

"Not before I get them," Trudy countered. "This year, all the men are going to want to dance with me!"

"You got here just in time!" Ward said to Chip, as he was texting. "Hate for you to miss the big Christmas barn Dance! It's a can't-miss event around here!"

All Chip could do was shake his head in the negative.

"I don't think Damon will be into that," he typed on his phone and showed it to Mr Spencer.

"Oh, I *know* he won't be into that," Ward replied. "But with a little sugar, I'm sure you can talk him into it."

Chip shook his head again, but Ward just smiled, convinced he was helping bring the two lovebirds together, and went on about his business. This vacation was becoming a living nightmare.



Friday evening, Damon returned back to the Spencer home after three days away, and two days since he had replied to any messages.

"I would have picked you up at the airport," Ward said as Damon cleared the snowflakes from his black coat.

"I needed a rental anyway," Damon explained.

"You could have called!" Trudy said, sitting by the fireplace, alongside Paula. "How inconsiderate. Don't you agree, Dad?"

"Well, I do think your mother would have like to know," Ward said to Damon.

"Great to see you guys, too," Damon grumbled. "Thank God I rushed back here from Los Angeles for this. Where's Holly?"

"She's with Mom," Paula said.

His sister was going to force him to ask, so he did. "Where's mom?"



"Making dinner."

Before he had a moment to think about it, the door to the kitchen was pushed open. "Dinner's ready..." Chip said as his voice trailed off.

Both Chip and Damon were in shock, having seen each other. Chip was in shock because he wasn't expecting his fake boyfriend back without any warning. Damon, because the man pretending to be his girlfriend was dressed in a black turtleneck, black tights and black flat-heeled boots, a dangling gold pendant necklace and a red check skirt. In addition, he was wearing a white apron and was holding oven mitts.

Beyond the shock of the way Chip was dressed was that he was speaking in a high feminine voice, albeit a raspy one.

"What happened to you?" Damon asked, betraying their deception. "Your voice?"

"It's a little dry. The doc says I can use it a little."

"But the sound..."

"Is that my son?" Came Mrs. Spencer's voice from the kitchen. She practically ran over Chip as she embraced her son. "Why didn't you call? Why? I was afraid you weren't coming back!"

"No time, no time," Damon said. "Crazy busy."

"Oh well, as long as you don't have to leave again," Mrs. Spencer said, breaking into a loving smile. "Dinner is on the table, everyone!"

As the family assembled in the dining room, Chip blocked Damon and held him back.

"Hey, that's Mom's casserole," Damon said, trying to get past Chip.

"I know!" Chip said in a loud whisper. "I cooked it! I've been trapped in that kitchen for three hours! Where the fuck have you been?"

"Please... Language," Damon said with a smirk.

"It's not funny! I've been stuck in this house for three days with your family! They. Won't. Stop. Talking. Always. Talking. Always."

"Eyes on the prize, buddy. You still got thee and a half weeks." He tried to get to the dining room, but Chip had put a full court press on him.

"They're driving me crazy! They really are! I'm not kidding!"

"I lived with them for years, okay? You're not telling me anything I don't already know."

"And listen to my voice!"

"You sound really good, That's why I told you to practice!"

"I didn't practice! My voice just sounds like this now! I can't make it sound like it used to!"

"It's probably because you didn't use it for so long. It'll be fine."

"If it's screwed up, I'm suing you! I swear to God!" Chip whispered even more annoyed with his new high voice.

"And my lawyers will sue your ass so hard, your great-grandchildren will be paying me money."

After dinner, and many helpings of a shockingly tasty baked potato casserole, the family divided up into the traditional divisions: Mrs. Spencer went into the kitchen to wash the dishes, the men (or at least the ones presenting as men) went to the living room for awkward silence, while the women (or those being bribed to look like a women) went to watch Mrs. Spencer do the dishes.

"Are you sure we can't help, Mom?" Trudy asked Mrs. Spencer, knowing full well the answer.

"You're guests, and guests don't do the dishes in my house," Mrs. Spencer replied.

"Well okay, Mom, if you insist," Paula said behind her mother's back with a wicked grin.

"That was really a good casserole thingy," Trudy said to Chip.

"Your mother helped a lot," Chip whispered.

"She keeps trying to teach me how to cook, but it's not my thing," said Paula, making Mrs. Spencer grunt.

"You're really fitting in well, you know."

"Yeah, when Damon said he was bringing his girlfriend home for Christmas, we were all afraid she was going to be sickeningly nice and you know, really pretty, and instead he brought you!"

"We were so relived."

Chip hated these two, and he had gained a begrudging respect for Damon to have survived living with them. Understandably, he had been given a ton of

issues and complexes from that experience, and it probably accounted for his extreme personality — in Chip's opinion.

"Good to hear," Chip said.

"In fact, I think you need to take the next step in becoming a Spencer," Trudy said with a smarmy smile. "Those shoes have to go."

"Yeah, all the Spencer girls wear heels." Paula added. "Right Mom?"

"That's what I taught you girls," Mrs. Spencer said. "A little bit of every-day elegance."

"What's wrong with..." Chip had worn a pair of women's flats today, picked up during the shopping trip, and even with the extremely flat heel, he was awkward in them. Unfortunately, he had an idea where Trudy and Paula were going, though. "I like my shoes. They're fine."

"Never let comfort get in the way of being a woman," Mrs. Spencer said, obviously a phrase she said often, because her daughters were mouthing along to it. "Trudy, a pair of your old pumps is in the sewing room. Why don't you give them to Holly?"

"Oh, great idea, Mom!" Trudy replied. She dashed off and in a matter of seconds returned with a pair of black leather pumps with three-inch heels.

Out in the living room, Ward was trying to steer the conversation towards his model train hobby, and Damon was desperately trying to steer it away from that subject, knowing full well the man could go on about model trains for days on end is he let him.

"...And the quad-door high cube boxcars are what all the collectors love," Ward was saying, "Yet they discontinued the line..."

"Hey, how about this excess ad inventory, huh?" Damon interrupted. "We thought we could reach the omnibuyers with a diversified format strat, but instead..."

A loud crash came from the kitchen, causing both men to pause, and then Damon sprung to he feet as he went to go check.

"Everyone okay in there?" Ward called from his recliner.

Damon pushed the door open to see the three Spencer women helping Chip to his feet. He was wearing high heels.

"What happened?" Damon asked.

"Nothing, nothing," Mrs. Spencer said, as she started to clean up broken porcelain from the floor with a dustpan.

"Your girlfriend is a klutz," Trudy said, as Chip was standing up straight again.

"She's a menace in heels," Paula clarified. Even she spoke, Chip needed emergency correction and assistance as he was about to fall again.

"I told you guys I wasn't very good in heels," He said in his whispery voice.

"Just don't burn the house down," Damon said to Chip, as he sighed away the tension of the moment. He closed the door as he left for the living room again.

"Don't worry, Holly," Mrs. Spencer said. "I taught two girls to walk in heels, I can teach you."

"That's okay, Mrs. Spencer..." Chip said.

"No, it is not okay. I will not have my boy marrying a Neanderthal." She shook a spatula to emphasize her point. "You *will* learn how to behave like a lady."



Two days later, Damon was looking out the back window of the kitchen, out at the coach house where Chip was holed up. "Have a seat and stop looking so nervous," Ward said to Damon.

Damon decided that staring out back, anxiously waiting to see if Chip showed up looking passable, was not a good use of his time. After all, he seemed to be able to put together an outfit and do his face and hair just well enough not to be detected. But just barely. he sat back down at the breakfast table.

It was morning, and he had been stirring around the extremely fatty breakfast his mother had prepared for him, avoiding eating it at all costs. He had already put on enough weight from his mother's delicious cooking. Chestnut Cove didn't have a gym, and he was not able to run in this frigid weather, so the only way to stay fit was to not let himself get unfit.

Ward, who was greedily shoveling eggs and bacon into his mouth at a frankly disquieting rate, finished his chewing to talk.

"You need a hobby," Ward said. "Something like my trains."

"Not the trains again," Damon said with despair.

"All right, all right, I'll stop talking about the trains. But you look so tense all the time."

"That's because I haven't been broken and tamed by women, Ward," Damon said, making it clear he didn't want or need advice.

"Damon, my boy, there will come a time when you realize you'll never win an argument when it comes to women."

"Like hell," Damon fried back. "If a woman gives me lip, they know what's going to happen to them."

"You have so much to learn."

"You mean learn how to surrender and give up on life? Your strategy?"

"You gonna eat those eggs?" Ward asked, blithely ignoring his step son's comment.



"Good morning," Chip said, as he came through the back door, very quickly closing it behind him and closing the insulating door as well. "Cold this morning." He rubbed his arms to try and get some warmth in him.

He was dressed in more of the clothes Trudy and Paula had bought for him, a red knit sweater and white pants with a plaid shirt underneath. He was also wearing a pair of mustard-colored boots.

It was obvious he had fallen in the snow in the short ten feet from the coach house, as he brushed it off onto the floor of the adjacent mud room. Damon noted the boots had a very slight heel of about a half inch, but he was having trouble with even them. Chip was hopeless.

"There you are, sweetie," Mrs. Spencer said, coming into the kitchen from wherever she had been. "Come on, we have a big day ahead!"

"Uh... We do?" Chip asked. he looked at Damon for an intervention, but none was coming.

"Yes! Now let me hear that voice of yours."

"My voice?"

"Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Say it."

"Say what?"

"Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Repeat it, girl!"

"Uh..."

Damon was turned away, sipping his coffee.

"Peter Piper picked..." Set began to say.

"Oh, that voice of yours is till so rough. We'll go into town and see Doc Tinsley."

"Again?"

"We promised you'd be back in a few days if it didn't improve. So let's get going."

"Damon?" Chip said, aloud, hoping to get any kind of response from him. He ignored Chip.

Mrs. Spencer stopped her pulling on Chip's sleeve. "Silly me. I'm letting my enthusiasm get away with me. Why, I haven't even let you give your man a nice morning kiss."

That snapped Damon's head around and caused Chip to freeze up in fear. They looked at each other in barely disguised panic.

"Go on, we have to get moving," Mrs. Spencer said, egging them on.

"You guys are in a hurry," Damon said.

Mrs. Spencer wasn't allowing that. "Never be so much in a hurry that you can't show each other love and attention. It's bad enough that Holly's all alone in the coach house every night."

Realizing they were stuck, Chip, in halting motions, gradually leaned over to Damon and, both their eyes wide open in sock, kissed him on the cheek.

"Okay, let's go, time to go, right now," Chip said marching off to go get in his coat.

When the two had left, Ward just looked over at his step-son and chuckled. "You two are something."

Damon grunted and went to go get some more coffee. As he did, his phone went off.

He checked it, and the message on the screen. "Got a fire I need to put out," he said, as he read. He put the phone back in his pocket.

"A fire?"

"Gotta go meet with a client," he said. "In Portugal." He headed for the guest room before even filling his mug.

"For Pete's sake, Damon. You have to be pulling my leg."

"It's business. I don't joke about business."



"Hello, Klaus," Mrs. Spencer said to the doctor when they arrived at the front desk. He only had a nurse on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, so he was working alone today.

"Why hello, Helen," the doctor said as he rose from his chair. "So wonderful for you to come by. Though I hope you're all right?"

"It's my son's girlfriend. She's still having trouble with that voice of hers."

Chip had been hanging around behind Mrs. Spencer, trying to look uninvolved. But with his fake name being brought up, he had to step forward, stumbling in his boots.

"I see, I see. Any discomfort?" He asked Chip.

"No," Chip replied, trying to make his voice sound smooth, but failing.

"A little raspy, yes. Well, let's get you into the exam room. Helen, I can give you call."

"I'll be at the market," Mrs. Spencer said, as she headed out.

The doctor escorted Chip into his exam room and Chip sat on the exam bench, looking nervous. "You can relax, Holly, I just want to take a look at that throat. Open wide, if you could."

He shined a pen light down Chip's open throat. The doctor could see the sutures on his vocal cords, still healing. He had done that during Chip's pervious visit, to raise the pitch of his voice. From the sound of it, it was working very well. "Now say 'ahh' noise if you could," the doctor requested.

Chip did as requested. The doctor seemed satisfied. "Very good, very good." He then shined the light into Chip's eyes, using a strobe function. His patient immediately fell into a hypnotic trance.

"Can you hear me?" He asked.

Chip nodded.

"Wonderful, wonderful. Now, young man, why don't we continue our talk about how you belong in panties."

"Yes," Chip replied, his eyes still closed.

The doctor flipped through the various emails Helen had sent him about "Holly Garland," and made some mental notes. One thing that stuck out to him was how much "Holly Garland" was always dressed like a fashion model.

"Now, Chip, how do you feel about fashion?"

"Never made sense to me," Chip replied in an etherial, dreamy voice.

"That's not true. In fact, fashion is something you've always, always felt passionate about."

"It is?"

"Yes, it is."



"Where are you?" Chip hissed to his phone. He was holding it up so he could be seen for the video call. On screen was Damon, looking very comfortable in against a golden sun on a rooftop in Lisbon.

"You probably don't want to know," Damon said with a shit-eating grin. "It would just depress you."

"Are you going to keep doing this? Just leaving me here with these people?"

"I run the fastest growing ad company in the country. Things happen, okay? Don't be so sore about it. Or would you rather be working?"

"You don't call this working? I have to…"

"Are all those yours?"

"All *what* mine?"

"The fuckin' shopping bags, fuck face."

Chip looked around at the bed he was sitting on, which was festooned with shopping bags, easily seen in the shot. "Yes, they're mine! I mean, I don't remember much of anything. That doctor gave me something... I can barely remember the last 24 hours..."

"Well, give the doc some credit. Your voice sounds much better. You're beginning to sound like a real woman."

"That's not a good thing. I can't talk with my real voice anymore."

"You worry too fuckin' much. Was there a reason you needed to talk to me or were you just going to whine like a goddamn baby?"

"Damon, I gotta get out of here! If you can leave, I should get to leave, too! I'm cramping up, I feel sick every morning..."

"You've just never been through a real winter, you pussy."

"I've lost five pounds in just a week of being here! How does that even happen? I have no appetite at all."

On his end of the line, Damon looked down at his stomach, worried people could see the four pounds he had put on after coming home.

"Suck it up," he told Chip.

"This isn't fair, Damon. I don't deserve to be treated like..." He looked beyond his phone, out the window of the coach house he was in, and immediately stopped what he was saying. "Okay, here come your sisters. Look out."

The door opened with Trudy and Paula piling into the room and onto the bed, twisting around to wave at the phone. They knew who "Holly" was calling and they weren't going to miss it.

Chip felt the need to make it look like they were having a couples chat. "So when are you coming back... Honey?" He nearly choked on the word.

"Heeeeey, big brother!" Paula called out as she slid into the view. "Ignoring your girlfriend again?"

Trudy threw herself onto the other side and nearly crowded Chip out of the picture. "She's so lonely, Dame! It'd be a shame if she found someone a little more... Available around town, wouldn't it?"

Paula made a mockingly concerned look at the phone Chip was struggling to hold. "Oh, that would be so sad, wouldn't it? We should take Holly out for a big night on the town!"

"Not before we take her to the salon and get her a date night makeover!" Trudy added.

"And a new killer dress!"

"Oh yes, it would be so sad if she attracted the eyes of all the single men in town..."

"So sad..."

"I'll talk to you later... *Honey."* Damon said. "You seem busy at the moment." The call terminated.

Trudy and Paula got back up and straightened their clothes and hair out. "Thank us later, sweetie," Paula said.

"Yeah, he'll be back sooner rather than later, I bet," Paula opined. "Anyway, Mom says it's time to start making dinner and needs you in the kitchen."

Chip sighed. It seemed like he was being trained to be a cooking housewife by Mrs. Spencer, and he didn't like it one bit. There was a reason God invented take-out, in his opinion. Cooking was something other people did.

For the moment, though, he had a question the girls could answer for him. "Um... guys..." Chip said. "Quick question. Where did these shopping bags come from?"

Paula and Trudy just looked at each other and left, giggling.

Chip nearly went after them, but he felt another wave of nausea come over him and he dashed for the toilet in case he was about to throw up. Again.



"You're doing very well, Holly," the doctor said as Chip was laying on the exam bench, once again hypnotized and semi-conscious.

"My name is Chip..."

"Your name is Holly Garland, and you know that."

"No... I'm Chip Larson..."

"Well, we'll keep working on that," the doctor said. He was looking over Helen's emails again. "How do feel about cooking?" The doctor asked his captive patient.

"I suck at cooking," Chip replied, his eyes unfixed and his voice monotone. "Never liked it."

"Well, Holly loves to cook. She's learning new things all the time. Cooking is her favorite hobby. Holly needs to cook for her family to feel useful. She's respects Helen so much for he cooking skills."

"She does?"

"Yes. In fact, she needs to listen to Helen. Helen can help her become the woman she wants to be. She's like a mother to you."



"You... You're back..." Chip said when Damon returned from his business trip a few days later. He rushed forward and embraced Damon, hugging him like a separated lover should.

Still, nothing could have shocked Damon more. Of course, with his whole family watching, Chip didn't have much of a choice, since he hadn't seen his "boyfriend" for three days. He had to put on the act.

"I missed you so much..." Chip said in a perfectly feminine voice, even higher than the executive had heard before.

Damon lightly patted Chip on the back. "Uh, yeah. Missed you too... Honey."

Chip was wearing his hair in a tie, letting it loosely fall down to his shoulders, over a beige cowl-neck sweater with flared sleeves and tight black jeans with black boots.

As they separated, Chip gave Damon the deadliest stare he could muster for a fraction of a second.

"How was Portugal?" Ward asked from his recliner. "Nice this time of year?"

"Better than nice, it was..." He looked around at the faces of his family, his sisters, his mother, Ward and Chip and realized they did not want to hear about how sunny and nice it was in Lisbon. "The people are very polite. I mostly just stayed at the hotel."

"Oh, pooh bear... We should go to Europe," Mrs. Spencer said to her husband, from a rocking chair next to his recliner.

"It would be nice, wouldn't it?" Ward replied.

Eager to talk to Damon, Chip grabbed his suitcase from the floor. "Let me help you unpack," he said, hauling the luggage down the hallway before anyone could stop him.

Damon stood where he was. "I got everyone presents from the flight," he said, checking his pockets.

"Oooh!" His sisters said in unison, and leaning forward from the sofa.



Damon picked a packet of salted nuts from his left pocket and a packet of raisins from his right. "Enjoy!"

"Seriously?" Trudy said with a sneer, but swiping the nuts anyway.

"Hey, share those!" Paula said to her sister.

"How thoughtful," Mrs. Spencer said, going back to the book she was reading and letting her smile drop right off her face.

"Damon!" Chip screeched from the other end of the house.

"I should go help her." Damon said, and left the room.

Paula fiddled with the plastic nut bag, the only noise in the otherwise silent room. "They're gonna break up by New Years," Trudy said, before grabbing the raisins.

"What's so fuckin' important?" Damon asked after closing the door of the guest room.

"You have to get me out of here, Damon," Chip said. "Something's not right!"

"This shit again?" Damon said, turning away and throwing his hands in the air. "I'm sick of you complaining! It's a million dollars, you stupid asshole! It's not going to be..."

"I... I don't care about the money! Just get me out of here! Pay me for the week, and..."

"It's the whole month or nothing, and if you quit on me, I'll get you kicked out of college!" Damon sighed. "Jesus, it's like arguing with a real cunt. What happened to your voice?"

"I don't know, it keeps getting higher!" Chip felt his throat. "And don't tell me to see the doctor! I think he's in on this!"

"In on *what?*" Damon asked, incredulously. "Is there some giant conspiracy to change your voice?"

"I don't know!" Chip wailed. "All I know is that my voice gets higher every day and he's the only person who's been messing with it."

"Has it occurred you to fuckin' ask him about it, genius?"

"That's the other weird thing. I can never remember our appointments. I get out of the car, I get to the office, and then I say hello to Doctor Tinsley, and then the next thing I know, it's three hours later!"

"That's cuz you're a fuckin' pussy. You get all worked up and then black out or something."

"Not I'm not! I'm not a pu..."

Knowing what Chip was about to say, Damon covered Chip's mouth. "Quiet, you dipshit!" He removed his hand slowly.

"I'm not a pussy," Chip said, quietly. "When I wake up, I'm groggy, like I've been drugged or something. The more times it happens, the worse it gets. I went to the doctor's yesterday, and I'm still feeling kinda... Out of it. Everything is foggy."

"Do remember him drugging you?"

Chip looked sheepish. He knew he didn't have a good answer. "No."

"Then it sounds like you're making shit up."

"What about my weight? I've lost ten pounds!" Chip said, showing off his lower half, which did look thinner and curvier. "I don't even have to wear that corset anymore. It's too big on me."

"Congratulations?" Damon replied.

"No, that's not good! I'm down to 128 pounds! I'm trying to *gain* weight, not lose it! And I'm losing all my strength too. It's all gotta be connected!"

"Connected? What kind of fuckin' crap is going on in that head of yours? Maybe being a blonde has gotten to you."

"Holly!" Came a call from outside the room.

"Yes?" Chip called back.

"Time to make dinner!" Mrs. Spencer said. Chip immediately went past Damon and opened the door.

"What, is that it?"

"No, it's not it. We still have a lot to talk about, but it's time to make dinner. You heard your mother! I have to go."

"Why are listening to her? I thought you wanted out."

"But... She asked me."

Damon wasn't sure why this took precedence over the big argument Chip had started, but he was all too happy to let it end.

"Did you have anything you wanted to eat tonight?" Chip asked.

"No, I'm fine. Whatever Mom's gonna make."

"Well, I'm the only one cooking tonight, so I get to choose."

"I don't know. Something with lots of meat in it."

"Got it," Chip said before scooting away to the kitchen.

Damon hated himself for watching him walk away, but he did have a decent set of legs and the tight jeans made them look fantastic.

Then he kept looking, and noted that Chip had been wearing a pair of black suede boots with four-inch heels. He had been walking in them this entire time, and was moving nimbly in them, like an experienced woman would.

When had he learned how to do that? Damon wondered.



"Why the fuck did you ever fuckin' agree to do this?" Damon grumbled under his breath.

"I'm sorry! I didn't know!" Chip said as quietly as he could. They were outside, standing at the side of the Chestnut Cove annual Christmas Parade. Literally the last place on Earth Damon ever wanted to be.

"When I was asked if I wanted to go out," Chip explained, "I thought they meant for dinner or something! I forgot about the parade!"

"How's everyone doing?" Mrs. Spencer asked the two, all smiles.

"Just great, Mom!" Damon replied with a cheerly smile.

"Can't wait, Mrs. Spencer!" Chip added.

"You should have backed out!" Damon growled at Chip when he turned away from his mother. "When you said you were going, that meant I had to go too!"

"How many times can I say I'm sorry?" Chip responded.

"Hey now, is that you, Damon?" Asked a random passer-by. "Philip Dubois!" he said, sticking out is gloved hand.

"Oh yes, of course, Philip... From the.. Thing," Damon replied returning the handshake. "Good to see you again."

"It's been a while! I heard you moved out west? Say now, who's the little lady?"

"But I'm not..." Damon tried to say.

"You coming on the hunting trip? You can't miss the trip up to Quayle Lodge! I know Wade is already booked."

"Yeah, well..."

Even Philip could tell Damon didn't want to talk. "I'll be on my way! I bet you two want to be alone!"

"Sure." Damon waited for the man to continue on. "See? This is the problem."

"What is?" Chip asked.

"Everyone thinks we're a couple!"

"Aren't we? I mean, only in appearance sake..."

"I would have preferred that our appearance was just for the benefit of my immediate family!"

"Damon! I never thought I'd see you again!" A woman said as she walked by. "And who's this? Don't tell me someone finally soothed the savage beast?"

Damon clearly had no idea who he was talking to. "It's uh... You know, I don't..."

"You don't have to be so coy, Dame! I think it's wonderful to be in love!" Said the woman in a conspiratorial tone. "I need to get to my husband and the parade is starting, so I'll see you later! Welcome back!" She trotted away quickly.

"Thanks," Damon said with his jaw clenched. "Great to see you."

Damon's gaze locked right onto Chip's eyes in anger.

"Sorry," Chip squeaked.

"You two look like you're on death row," Trudy said as she barged in between them and Mrs. Spencer.

"Yeah, but we can get you out of here, if you want," Paula added as she popped through the crowd.

"What's it going to cost me?" Damon asked.



"Nothing! Well, maybe Holly can make that awesome chicken fried steak again tonight?"

"With gravy and mashed potatoes," Trudy appended.

"Deal," Damon said.

"Okay, while I distract Mom, you guys follow Paula."

"Okay," Damon replied, eager to escape. He looked to his ersatz date. "Okay?"

"Yeah, okay," Chip replied.

As Trudy engaged her mother in smalltalk, pointing out thing in the opposite direction of Chip and Damon, two swiftly followed Paul through the crowd as fast as they could, and around to the very start of the parade route.

They stopped in front of one of the floats and caught their breath. Chip was slower to arrive, as his high heeled boots slowed him down.

As Damon looked up, though, he saw the float he had decided to rest in front of.

"Kissin' Couples of Chestnut Cove," said large signs attached to a hay wagon.

"Oh no," Damon said as he headed away. "This was a setup!" He yelled at Paula.

"Yup!" Paula said with a smile. She turned to the crowd. "Who wants to see my brother on the wagon?" She yelled.

Some of the people setting up the float started to usher Damon toward a step-ladder to get on, He was trying to get away from, but the crowd was already in the spirit and cheering him on. With nowhere to go, unless he wanted to start a brawl, he let himself be corralled onto the stairs.

After helping Chip up the stairs, Damon turned to see the wagon was occupied with five sets of teenagers already necking as they sat in the fluffy bed of hay. "Great," he mumbled. He turned to Chip. "This is your fucking fault."

"How was I supposed to know?"

"Have fun you two!" Paula said, waving from below.

The holiday floats, carrying Santa, elves, snowmen and shriners, trundled past the holiday parade goers, all being cheered and applauded. The high school band did a few holiday songs as they marched past, and baton twirlers thew their batons high in the air.

The Kissin' Couples float slowly pulled out and began its excruciatingly leisurely journey down the main street of the town. Past everyone he knew in Chestnut Cove, and everyone he had sworn to forget in Chestnut Cove, Damon sat in the hay and waved with least enthusiastic wave ever made.

His school mates, his teachers, the shopkeepers, they mayor and of course, old doc Tinsley.

Damon had the bad luck to have spotted his mother, who was looking absolutely overjoyed and overwhelmed to see her son and his girlfriend on the float, declaring themselves as couple to the whole town.

He could also see Trudy and Paula by her side waving back, smiling in evil complicity.

"Kiss!" Trudy shouted.

"Kiss! Kiss! Kiss!" The crowd started to chant.

Chip turned to Damon who was already staring back at him.

"You try it and I'll fire you right here and now," he said, succinctly.



"I still think you should have told your girlfriend you were coming," Philip Dubois said as he navigated the vey snowy and icy roads up north.

"Yeah, well, she'll find out one way or the other." Damon was trying to work his stock portfolio on his phone for the three-hour drive up to Quayle Lodge, but cell service was intermittent out this far. That didn't stop him from tapping, just so he looked busy and could avoid having to carry on a conversation with his dull companion.

That morning, he had been given another opportunity to go on this annual hunting trip when he ran into Philip on his way home from the parade, which many of the townsfolk went on every year. Damon had been on it three times with his real father, so many years ago. Today, it seemed like the perfect way to get as far from the town as he could.

The big dance was happening tonight, and he knew he's be manipulated into going. He didn't know how, but some way, somehow, he'd be roped into it. Leaving town was the best way to nip that little problem in the butt.

Damon was also thinking that if Chip felt a little abandoned, he deserved it for getting him into that parade in the first place, so he wasn't feeling a speck of remorse.

However, as much as he was looking forward to the angry text from Chip when he realized that he was on his own again for a few days, the cell service was making sure he couldn't get it. He finally gave up and stuffed the phone in his pocket.



"Fudge!" Chip growled at his phone. Or at least, what passed for a growl. It was more like a mew in his high voice.

"What, didn't dear brother apologize?" Trudy said, watching Chip hammer another text message away on his phone.

"The messages can't be delivered," Chip said, angrily. He sent a new one, but it didn't go through, either. It was probably the snowstorm moving in on the town. "Who does he think he is?" He snapped.

"He's an ass," Paula said, returning from the kitchen with a freshly baked cookie. Mrs. Spencer had been in baking overdrive to get enough made for the dance coming up tonight.

"His ego is a monster that never gets enough to eat," Trudy opined. "He's doing what he always does. Basically thinking only about himself."

"And his money," Paula added.

To be honest, Chip was also thinking about his money, as it was the only thing that was keeping him going. A million dollars was at the end of his personal rainbow.

Trudy's resting bitchface brightened up for a moment. "Hey, you know what you need? A salon day."

"Oh, she totally does," Paula agreed, looking at Trudy. "I so need my nails done."

"I haven't had my eyebrows tweezed in days," Trudy said.

"Let's do it," Paula said back, grabbing her phone. "I'll make the reservations." It didn't appear that either were really thinking that much about "Holly."

"I'll get the car started!" Trudy said, grabbing her coast as she ran out the front door.

"Are you going into town, girls?"

"I guess so," Chip replied, with a shrug.

"Well, stop by the doc's. I promised him you would go."

"I don't really feel like..."

"Okay!" Paula put her phone away. "Salon for three, drop by the doc's! Got it! Let's go, Holly!" She pulled Chip from the sofa and escorted him out.



"I hear Holly is becoming quite the cook," the doctor said as his patient laid on the exam bench, groggy and drugged.

"I guess so," Chip replied.

"Yes, she's going to make for a fine bride, I think." The doctor compared the photos of "Holly Garland" to the patient he had before him, and came to a quick conclusion. "You know, I think Holly doesn't quite look like herself," he said.

"Huh?"

"Yes, Chip, could you help Holly? She needs to recapture the look she used to have before coming to Chestnut Cove. Do you think you could do that?"

"Her look?"

"Her hair, her makeup… She needs to look better. More of the Holly Garland she used to be. The girl needs to smile. A woman always looks better with a smile."



"So what do you want to do?" Asked a person leaning over Chip. "I can make you a totally new person."

"Huh?" Chip replied, looking around. Just like he had in his last several visits to the doctor's, he had awoken well after the appointment was over.

"Answer her, Holly," Paula said. "Make up your mind, girl!"

"Uh... What?" He looked around to see that he was seated in a salon chair, presumably in a salon. The equipment, mirror and hairdressing supplies nearby seemed to confirm that.

"What kind of look do you want?" Trudy asked. "I say something new. Make that boyfriend of yours regret ever leaving you alone."

"So, what do you think?" The hairdresser asked again, this time turning Chip so he could look at himself in the mirror.

"Something... New?" Chip replied. He stared at his reflection. It wasn't quite as... *Alien* as he was used to. In his Holly disguise, he'd always been startled to see the woman looking back in his reflection.

This time, though, it was different. For some reason, he was comfortable with his new face. It felt familiar to him. The wide eyes with thick lashes, the thin brows arching up high and the thick lips pouting all felt natural.

It also felt like he needed to make sure he looked his best. He felt a desire — a deep desire — to look good. Really good. "Actually, I like my look," he said with a smile. "I just want to make it better."



It was three days later when Philip DuBois and Damon pulled up in the driveway to the Spencer home, and they returned with a friend: a white-tailed buck tied to the front of the car.

"Did they hit a deer?" Chip said as he watched them pull up the driveway.

"Honey," Mrs. Spencer said, "they were hunting. That's their kill."

"Ugh," Chip said, not knowing what else to say about a dead deer tied to the grill of the car. "Why bring it back?"

"That's dinner, sweetie."

"Oh, no. No no no."

"Hi, Mrs. Spencer," Philip said as he was met at the front door. "Hope you don't mind me kidnapping your son like that."

"Oh, no, it's good to see him doing some of the things he used to do when he was younger."

Philip was bumped from the back as Damon was cradling the dead buck behind him.

"Whoa, whoa!" Ward said. "Not through here. Take around back and leave it on the deck. The cold will keep it chilled until we need it."

"I'm about to drop this!" Damon said, struggling.

Philip grabbed the legs. "I'll help, I'll help."

"I'm not cooking that thing," Chip said, nervously.

"I know what to do," Mrs. Spencer said. "I've done this a hundred times. I'll show you how. Most of it will wind up as jerky anyway."

"Jerky?"

"We must have thirty pounds of it in the basement."

The men got the deer resting on a patio table out back, and after Philip politely refused a dozen cookies as a reward, he was off. Damon came in to finally rest after his long trip, and headed for the guest room to shed his jacket from the first time in days.

Of course, Chip wasn't about to let Damon get a moment to himself without answering some questions.

"You think you're clever?" Chip asked, out of sight from Mr. and Mrs. Spencer.

"I was offered the trip and I took it. What's your problem? That I didn't check with my *girlfriend?"*

"Look, as far as I can tell, *I'm* the one spending time with your family this Christmas, not you!" Chip said. "And I don't even know them! I barely even know *you!"*

"For a million dollars..."

"Forget the money, Damon!" Seths aid. "I'm not talking about that! I'm telling you, you're not running away from *me,* you're running away from your *family* — and they know it. You're probably making things worse by avoiding them now than you ever were when you stayed in L.A.!"

"You're not being paid to be my fucking conscience," Damon said.

"I wouldn't take that job for a million dollars. Well, *another* million dollars."

"I wouldn't offer it. You've lost your mind. Look at how you're dressed."

Chip looked at himself. He was wearing his most feminine outfit yet, a black long sleeve v-neck top, a plaid red skirt and knee-high black suede boots. It exposed about three inches of very cleanly shaven leg. "Really? You've been gone for three days and the first thing you notice about me is my clothes?"

"What?" Damon asked. "It's kind of..." In taking a second, or really, first look at Chip's face, he did realize he had missed something. "What did you do to yourself?"

"I did it at the salon here in town," Chip said with a smile. He turned his head left and right to be seen better. "What do you think?"



Previously, in his attempts to look like the photos of "Holly Garland" he had been able to look like her in a surface kind of way, but the overall effect was a little lacking. He had the same hair color, the same amount of mascara, the same color of lipstick as the photos, but it wasn't quite convincing on close examination.

Now it was a different story. He had colored his hair in a near duplicate of the girl in the photos, had somehow captured the very same look of her eyes and had added a pair of very large earrings, just like the photos showed. It made a stunning difference in Chip's appearance.

If Damon didn't know the truth, he would have never questioned that he was looking at a real woman. He could have believed that his was Holly Garland, or at least a woman related to her. He had captured her look in most ways.

"The hardest thing is to make it look as nice as they did at the salon every day," Chip explained.

"Well, I guess it's good?" Damon responded. "I mean, you do look a lot more like the photos."

"Thanks!" Chip responded with a genuine smile of appreciation. He turned to a mirror and primped his hair a bit. "You know, I wasn't sure if I should try the freckles or not... I mean, it would be a lot of work to do that makeup every morning and..."

"I don't need the fuckin' DVD commentary track, okay?" Damon cut in.

"Fine," Chip responded with a little bit of a pout. "Oh, the doctor did say I didn't have any more problems with my voice, and I didn't need to see him about that."

"Good. Although you still sound like a girl."

"I guess I'll just have to wait for it to wear off or something."

"So no more going to see Doc Tinsley."

"Well... Not for my voice."

"For fuck's sake. Now what's wrong with you?"

"He did think that my hormone balance was off a little, so he's giving me some shots every couple of days. Right in my tooshie."

"Tooshie?"

"I mean my butt," Chip said with the hint of a giggle.

"My family is starting to rub off on you. Especially my sisters." He side-eyed Chip. He certainly seemed to be behaving a little differently than he usually did. He seemed to be unfocused and aloof. "You need to get out of this house."

All of the sudden, Chip's demeanor changed and he lunged forward, clasping his hands together in a plea. "Is that an offer? Please say it's an offer. I really think something is happening to me..."

"Three o'clock, hun!" Came Mrs. Spencer's voice from down the hall.

"Oh, time to start making dinner," Chip said, checking a wall clock. He immediately departed fro the kitchen. "I'll be right there, Mom!"

Damon intended to flop on the guest bed, which he did, but couldn't quite close his eyes. Hearing Chip use the term "Mom," made him wonder if it was a mistake or if he meant to say that. He made for the kitchen himself to find out.

"It's really not that hard, you just have to be brave..." Mrs. Spencer said, going over a diagram of a deer's organs.

"Uh, excuse me. Did you call my mom, *Mom*?" Damon asked Chip.

"Oh, that's my idea," Mrs. Spencer said. "She's practically part of the family by now."

"But, I mean, if it bothers Damon..." Chip began to say.

"Tut-tut!" Mrs. Spencer interrupted. "Damon knows better than to cross his mother," she said with a stare at her son.

"Okay... Mom," Chip said, reluctantly, knowing he had triggered Damon in some way. He shrugged so only Damon could see it.

"There!" the old woman said with a cheery, bright smile. "Now, I'll talk you through preparing and cooking venison, but I'm going to let you do all the work. A woman should know these things."

"All right, let's get started," Chip said, pulling an apron over his head. "Thanks for helping me, Mom."

"Of course! It's a Spencer family right of passage. The first time the husband's game is prepared and served for dinner by the wife." Mrs. Spencer covered her mouth in mock shame. "Oh, I'm getting ahead of myself, aren't I?"



At around three o'clock that morning, Damon woke with a start. He could hear something moving. He was sure of it.

Then, as his memory came back to him, he realized what it was. It was Chip sleeping next to him. It had been three years since he'd been in the same bed as another person. At least back then, it was with a woman. Now, since they had run out of excuses as to why "Holly" needed to sleep in the coach house, he had been forced to share his bed with the young man.

The anxiety he felt about sleeping with Chip in his bed wasn't just limited to the awkwardness of sleeping with a man in a nightgown. No, it was the memories. The memories of what he used to be like in bed with a woman. The things he used to feel when a woman gave herself over to him were almost unspeakably intense. The way he'd make them scream for mercy and beg him to let up were memories he never wanted to recall, but they were pouring back into his sleep-deprived head right now.

He knew he couldn't help himself when it came to sex. He had to not just *fuck* a woman, he had to *break* them. Damon could only find satisfaction in a woman's cries of torture as he did everything imaginable to utterly decimate them.

There were few things in Damon's life where he ever showed restraint, but knowing that he'd go too far one day, and maybe take a life in pursuit of his kinks, he had to stop. He promised himself that he would never sleep with a woman again.

Seeing the figure beside him with long hair and smelling faintly of perfume and floral shampoo was giving Damon the shakes. He tried to rest his head again on a sweat-dampened pillow and hope he didn't churn up any more nightmares, but he knew he was fighting a losing battle.



"You should probably get up," Chip said as he was getting dressed. Damon was still in bed, hoping against hope he could get just five solid minutes of sleep before he had to begin his day.

"Leave me alone," Damon mumbled from bed.

Chip shimmied into a cream colored belted sweater dress. He then put on a gold pendant necklace and began to affix large dangling earrings.

"When did you get your ears pierced?" Damon asked from bed.

"I..." Chip's expression fell. "I don't remember."

"You don't remember? That's the kind of thing you never forget."



"Well... I..." Chip's expression was getting serious, even as he put the other earring in. "I mean, honey... Things have been so crazy around here lately."

"Why would you do that? Isn't that painful?"

"I mean... Have you ever gone shopping with your sisters? They're kind of... Persuasive." Chip replied as he stepped into a pair of tan leather boots Damon hadn't seen before. It was easily Chip's fifth set of footwear since they had arrived, and it hadn't even been two weeks yet.

"You can always say no."

"And I do. Most of the time."

"Sure."

"Dear, would you please just get up? Mom is going to be cross if you're not ready for breakfast."

"In private, you don't need to use 'Dear' and 'Honey' you know."

"I didn't use any of those words."

"You used them both in the last sixty seconds."

"No I didn't."

"I'm not going to argue with you. You said..."

"Good! No argument! I'm right!" Chip said, and left without giving Damon any rebuttal.

About an hour later, an unshaved and minimally cleaned up Damon appeared for breakfast, and was rewarded with a bowl of very cold plain oatmeal by his mother, who wanted him to know, though cooking, that she did not approve of her son's late arrival.

"It's like I'm fourteen again," Damon said looking at the bowl in front of him.

"What's that?" Chip asked as he worked some dough into a thin layer.

"Nothing," Damon replied.

"Oversleeping always makes him grumpy," Mrs. Spencer said, who was whipping up some frosting.

"Mom," Chip said to her. "I said I can do this. You take it easy."

"Nonsense. I've been doing this for forty years and..."

"And you deserve a break." Chip took the bowl from her and pt it where she couldn't get it.

Damon, unamused, looked away, but noted all the stacks of Tupperware on every available shelf. "What's all this? Are these cookies?"

"For the dance, honey," Mrs. Spencer replied. "Holly has been baking up a storm. You don't want to interrupt her when she's in the zone."

"The dance was two days ago. I was hunting. They already had it."

"Big blizzard that night," Chip clarified. "They pushed it tomorrow."

Mrs. Spencer was excited. "You should see the dress Holly got for it. She's going to look so beautiful! I can't wait!"

Damon had never bit into oatmeal so hard. He had spent three days with insufferable morons in freezing cold temperatures for nothing. Now he had to find another way to get out of this dance.

Chip made a shooing motion towards Helen. "No go. Get out of my kitchen."

"*Your* kitchen?" Helen replied.

"For today, at least," Chip added. "This is Holly Garland's kitchen. No Helen Spencers allowed."

"Have it your way. But if you need any help, I'll be..."

"I won't need any help, Mom. I can handle it."

With a sigh and a rare expression of defeat, she left the small kitchen. Damon was amazed. Chip had just kicked his mother out. It was unheard of.

"That was priceless," Damon said when it was just him and Chip. "Old bat."

"Don't talk that way about her. She's your mother, honey."

"Don't remind me. I already have to bear her genetics."

"Damon!" Chip snapped. "Be nice!"

"Word of advice. Don't stick up for her."

"Don't stick up for who?" Mrs. Spencer said, coming back into the kitchen. She went to the fridge for something.

"Mom!" Chip said, sounding annoyed.

"I'm just getting some juice," she explained. "I'm parched."

"Sure you are."

"You might consider getting something nice for the dance," Damon's mother said to him. "Something other than a business suit."

"I'm not going to the dance," Damon explained. "Not in a million years."

"Well, you're going, aren't you?" The mother asked Chip.

"And miss seeing it? Of course I'm going. Besides, I have to deliver these cookies."

Damon agreed. "Yeah, Holly can go. Just send them my regards."

"The whole town will be talking!" Mrs. Spencer said, crossly. "You're going, and you will escort your own girlfriend there. I won't allow you to make her the talk of the town for showing up alone!"

"This isn't 1950, Mom!"

"A man escorts their girl to a public function!" Mrs. Spencer insisted. "You will go!"

"Like hell."

"Don't cuss in front of your mother!" Mrs. Spencer said.

"I'm not going, and that's all there is to it!"

"We'll just see about that." Mrs. Spencer looked over Chip's shoulder. "I have more cookie cutters down in the basement. I'll go get them."

"No, Mom!" Chip said. "I can handle this! Get out of here!"

"It'll just take a second."

"I said no!" Chip then did something Damon didn't even think was possible. He grabbed his mother's wrists and maneuvered her away. She made the old woman do a perp walk out of her own kitchen as Chip gently pushed her. "No more fussing!"

Just before she was thrust out, she turned to her son. "You *are* going," she said with the certainty and gravity that indicated there wasn't any more debate on the topic. From experience Damon knew he had already lost the argument.



The annual Christmas Barn Dance was arranged by the local church, and had been an ongoing event in Chestnut Cove for well over eighty years. It wasn't a functional barn they held the event in, but a converted one that had been refurbished and re-built several times. It now served as a museum, with all the amenities of a modern building but still with a very rustic look and feel.

The museum's contents had been stowed for the night, and prepared with string lights draped from the rasters, and dozens tables with a hundred or so chairs distributed around the floor.

By the time people were being let in, a band was on a corner stage playing music that was varied in between classic country and contemporary folk music.

"It's all very cozy, isn't it?" Chip said to Trudy, as he finished laying out the hundreds of festive Christmas cookies. As dazzling as the display of frosted

home-make cookies was, even more spectacular was Chip himself.

He had spent probably hours on his hair, making it shine and shimmer. His makeup was on point and his jewelry was just the right balance between showy and subdued.

Chip was perched on a pair of glittery silver sandals that looked like they were made from the blanket of snow outside with three inch heels and an ankle strap, showing off his nude polished toenails.

For his dress, Chip had selected a red ruched satin cowl neck with a halter top and open back mini sheath, that showed off miles of shapely leg and and let his long hair graze along his bare back.



"You're just lucky you saw that dress first, or else I would have gotten it," Trudy said.

"Finders keepers," Chip said with a knowing smile and giggle.

At a table far away, Damon was seated in the least lit part of the barn, stewing. He couldn't think of bigger waste of his time than this, and if things went wrong, a no more humiliating way to be humiliated.

One wrong word, one ripped seam, one stumble into a punch bowl and everything would be up. If Chip was exposed, his life would be over.

On the other hand, if he was dragged out onto the dance floor and forced to play the part of loving couple with Chip, that may not be publicly humiliating, but he would have to live with the shameful memory of how low he had stooped for the rest of his life.

"Well, well," said an old man who had appeared in front of him. The place was still filling up, and new people were arriving all the time, but Damon was sure

no one would bother him if he looked angry enough. He was wrong. "I haven't seen you for nearly thirty years, Damon," the man said.

"Hey, doc," Damon replied.

"Mind if I sit?" the doctor asked as he sat down. "I'm always impressed with the decorations for the Christmas dance." He got comfortable and looked around. "This old barn has never looked so good."

Damon then noticed where the doctor's eyes had rested. He was looking at Chip. He was talking to Trudy and being introduced to various people coming over, attracted by free cookies and Chip's daring Christmas dress.

"You, uh..." Damon felt like asking the old man why he was openly gawking at Chip, but he didn't want to have to stick up for him. "You always come to these things?"

"No, no. But I had a reason this year."

Knowing that the doctor was keeping his eyes trained on Chip only filled Damon with questions. "What kind of reasons?"

The doctor finally stopped staring at Chip and looked Damon in the eyes. "Love," he said. "Although, knowing you, I don't think you'd understand."

Damon didn't hesitate to fire back from that insult. "What the fuck is that supposed to mean, old man?"

The doctor returned to looking at Chip. "I'm a little jealous, you know. If I was younger, I'd never have let a woman like that out of my sight."

The both of them saw Chip from the other side of the room, laughing talking, gesturing with his long-nailed hands and soaking in the deserved attention he was getting.

"She's quite special, you know. And not just because she's going to finally give my dear Helen the next generation of family she's always wanted."

"My mom may not get..."

"You mother deserves anything her heart desires!" Said the doctor, brusquely. "No matter what the hell you try to pull. If Helen wants it, she is going to get it. Especially if I have any say over things."

Damon was very suspicious of that remark. It sounded like he knew about Chip and who "Holly" really was under that dress. In fact, in a moment of stark realization, it occurred to Damon that of anyone in town, the doctor who had been treating Chip for his voice might just have known about Chip's secret — and Damon's.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Damon asked. "What are you implying?"

"She's become even more beautiful since she arrived in town, don't you think? Even more graceful and ladylike."

As if to punctuate the moment, Chip did a little half spin, twirling his hair.

"Your mother sent me so many pictures of Holly over the past year, the very image of femininity and grace." The doctor sighed. "I think she's beginning to live up to that promise."

Damon had no interest in anything but an answer. "You didn't answer me."

"Damon, I won't let anyone harm Helen. Not even people who claim to love her the most." He started a prolonged procedure of standing up. "I'm in the business of helping people live a life of happiness and hope. Apparently, you're in the business of crushing those same things." He brushed his pants off and headed away. Then he turned around. "Why not let the magic of Christmas into your heart, Damon?"



By the time the barn was packed full with the chattering and dancing citizens of Chestnut Cove, Damon Spencer was in a dark place.

His mind was burdened with the thought that doctor Tinsley had seen through their little ruse. Of course, if he had, why hadn't he just exposed them both, or just said flat-out that he knew truth? The doctor would hold all the power in that situation.

If he did know the truth, the ways that doctor could hold him up for blackmail were almost infinite. Yet he hadn't actually said anything that indicated he was going to do that.

Maybe the doctor was simply suspicious, Damon had to think. If he was merely trying to get Damon to spill the beans and tell him everything, then Damon had to play this as if nothing had changed.

The people who were nice enough to stop by his table and say hello were all universally rewarded with a grave stare and a square-jawed grimace from Damon. He was determined to scare as many people as he could from having any interaction with him.

"Honey, do you want a drink?" Chip asked as he placed his hands over Damon's. "I'm going to the bar."

"Whiskey. Straight up." Damon said. The buzz from his last drink was wearing off.

He watched as Chip walked away, his thin body looking delectable in his shiny dress and swiveling his ass in his high heels. Damon had to remind himself what he was looking at wasn't what it seemed.

Because it seemed like Chip Larson was taunting every man in the building to approach him and try something. He couldn't help but think that Chip was asking for it.

Damon got up and followed after Chip, and caught up with his office intern halfway on the way to the bar, grabbing him by the wrist. Chip spun around, shocked to be accosted like he was.

"What?" Chip asked in his soft, feminine voice.

"You! You're trying to get men to look at you!" Damon accused him. "You're dressed like a slut!"

"Huh?" Chip replied.

"Look at the way you're dressed! The way you're acting! You're losing your mind!"

Chip's expression went from shock, to confusion, to shame and then — as he looked down to see his dress and bare legs — wound up on the brink of tears.

"You... You're right," Chip said. "I think I am."

That was not the answer Damon was prepared for. "Sorry?"

"I really think I'm losing my mind," Chip said, as his voice began to waver.

Damon looked around for a place to take this suddenly urgent conversation that offered any degree of privacy, but wherever he looked, he was surrounded by crowds of people. Just as he did, the band started up a loud song.

"We can't talk here," Damon shouted over the music and crowd noise.

"We have to," Chip said. "They can't hear me out here."

"Who can't?"

"The people controlling me," Chip said, looking very worried. "Or whatever's going on."

"Controlling you?"

"Do think I'm trying to act like this? That I want to... Wear a dress like this? I'm practically naked!"

It was a good thing the crowd couldn't hear their conversation, otherwise that statement might have grabbed someone's attention. As it was, Damon could just barely hear Chip.

"What do you mean? Of course you..."

"No I'm not!" Chip insisted.

The booze swirling around in his bloodstream made it very difficult for Damon to focus, but he was doing his best. He was still holding Chip by his bare shoulders, grasping them firmly, his grip getting tighter.

"Wait. No. Explain this. Why would you dress like this if you didn't..."

"Your sisters made me wear this! I didn't want it!"

"Tell them to fuck off! I do!"

"But I can't! I just... I don't want to... I want them to like me... I can't help it!"

"Just do what you want and..."

"But they teased me, Damon! They made fun of me!"

"Where is this coming from?" Damon shouted. "You're not going to let a bunch of girls push you around, are you?"

"But they won't like me if I did that! You want your family to like me, right? You said so!"

"Yeah... Just... Show some spine!"

The song changed to something a little more traditional. "We should probably dance," Chip said. "So it doesn't look like..."

"Since when do you know how to dance?"

"Mom... Your mother taught me."

"My mom taught you how to dance?"

"Well, a little bit. Then she signed me up for classes at the community center. She even bought me a dress for it."

"When? When was all this happening?"

"When you were running away!" Chip said, angrily. "What do you think happens while you're gone?"

"Okay. Fine. Now what do you mean by 'people controlling you?'"

"I mean that sometimes I can't do what I want to do... Sometimes..."

Before he could complete his sentence, A bright light shone on both Chip and Damon. Someone had just selected them for the spotlight dance.

"Shit. I didn't even know they did this anymore," Damon said.

"C'mon, let's just do this," Chip said and got his hands into position. Damon sighed a heavy sigh. He couldn't do anything but go along with it.

As he took Chip's hands, the crowd around them applauded and backed away, letting the two have the dance floor to themselves.

"Fuck," Damon said quietly, careful to keep his mouth still so people couldn't read his lips.

It had been a while, but Damon could still do a basic shuffle two-step. He figured that his high school prom was the last time he had to do this.

Chip was pressed against him tight enough that Damon could feel the blobby gel packs stuffed into his intern's bra. "Not so close," Damon mumbled.

"Sorry..." Chip mumbled back. After a few moments, he looked up at Damon. "They're going to expect us to kiss when the song is over, you know."

"Yeah, I know," Damon said back. "I'm thinking maybe I should fake twisting my ankle or something."

"No, we can do it. You ever hear of a stage kiss?"

"I'm liking my ankle idea better."

"I used to to these in school. You kiss below my lower lip, I kiss between your nose and upper lip."

The music was starting to wind to a conclusion, and they needed to make a decision quick.

Damon made the mistake of sneaking a glance at the crowd. Everyone was watching them. Every single person.

"Ah, fuck, fine," Damon capitulated, knowing that wussing out would attract much more attention than what Chip had suggested.

The music did eventually stop, and Chip stepped even closer, turning his head up, puckering up his red lips and closing his thickly-lashed eyes.

Damon went in and planted his lips on Chip's upper lip. Chip went for the lower. After four or five seconds of wriggling their heads slightly to really sell it, the crowd responded with cheers and clapping.



Mercifully, the spotlight was then turned off and another song began to play, so They could stop, which they were both grateful for.

"What did you want? A whiskey?" Chip asked.

Damon grabbed Chip by the arm and took him off the dance floor. "Never mind that, we need to talk!"

"No, they can hear me!"

"Who can hear you?"

"I don't know! The voices! They just make me so confused all the time. The voices are in my head!"

"Voices? What the fuck..."

"Oh you looked so precious! My baby is in love!" Mrs. Spencer said, rushing up to the both of them awash in emotion.

"Not now, Mom!" Damon said, gruffly. "We're..."

"Big bro! You're going to break the hearts of half the women in this room!" Trudy said, sweeping to her mother's side.

"And the other half sick to their stomachs," Paula added as she joined the rest of her family. "At least the ones who know you."

"Holly, I have to show you all the photos I took!" Mrs. Spencer said and she practically hooked Chip by the arm. "You'll love them! It's like a movie!" She added, and took him away.

Damon tried to go after them, but Trudy and Paula closed in. "I do hope I'm not losing my brother to the strings of matrimony," Paula said, teasingly.

"Yeah, I had always hoped we would be the ones to sap you of your free will."

"And break your spirit."

Damon could only watch and observe Chip being pulled into the crowd, as he looked back in distress.

"I need a drink," Damon said, heading away to the bar.



Somewhere along the line, a buzzed Damon agreed to go out for drinks with Ward and some other townies after the dance, and it wasn't until he got in at about 2:00 in the morning that he saw Chip again.

When he did, he saw that Chip was in the guest bed, asleep, dressed in a satin nightgown and his hair up in braids. For someone who was claiming he was dressing sexy against his will, he was looking very comfortable with himself.

The drunken man stumbled against the dresser as he tried to take his shoes off, waking the slumbering Chip. "You drunk?" He asked.

"Fuck yeah," Damon replied. Then he gained a little bit of situational awareness and remembered he had an outstanding question for Chip. "Those voices still talking to you?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Chip said, turning away.

"You know, the voices! The ones that..."

"No!" Chip interrupted. "Please, don't! Not here! They can hear me here!"

"You're making this shit up!"

"Quiet!" Chip hissed. "I'm begging you!"

The drunken executive wasn't used to being told what to do and combined with the half a bottle of whiskey in his stomach, he was plenty belligerent about it. "You're faking it!" Damon shouted. "You're trying to get me all worked up over nothing!"

"Please be quiet!"

"Oh, you'd like that, wouldn't you?" Damon said loudly, puffing up his chest. "Just try and pretend you didn't say anything, huh?"

"No, please, Damon!" Chip pleaded. "I really don't know how, but they know everything that happens here!"

"Who? Aliens? Little green Martians? Ghosts? What the fuck, Chip?"

"Ssssh!" Chip said, looking very anxious.

"No! Why should I? I'm going to tell the world..."

Chip jumped out of bed and grabbed his things. "I can't stay here with you like this!"

"What's the matter? Can't take the truth?" Damon asked. He was almost too inebriated to react as Chip headed out of the room. "Hey!" He shouted before getting his balance right and following the intern.

Chip made straight for the back door, still in just his nightgown, and headed outside in the freezing cold and dark back yard.

Damon made it only to the door, not wanting to go outside without his shoes or coat on. "You can't run away!" Damon shouted into the yard, as Chip went inside the coach house. "I know where you are!"

The coach house door slammed shut.

"What in all of creation is going on out here?" Mrs. Spencer said to her son, as she emerged from the hallway, in her housecoat and hair in rollers. "Damon! Close that door!"

"She thinks she's going to get away with it!" Damon yelled at his own mother. In his state, everything he said was a yell. He then shouted out into the yard, "We she's not!"

"Lower your voice! This is a quiet neighborhood!" Mrs. Spencer scolded her son. She looked out back to see the lights go on in the coach house, and then back out again. "Did you chase poor Holly out into the cold?"

She slammed the door shout, jarring her son. "She's lying! She's trying to..."

"Never mind! Just close your trap and go to bed, you drunken fool!" Mrs. Spencer said. "You can work this out in the morning!

"Work it out? No! She's the one..."

"To bed!" Helen said, using a line with her son she hadn't used in twenty five years.



"Get a good night's sleep?" Ward asked when Damon showed up at about 11:30 that next morning.

"Huh?" A bleary-eyed Damon replied, as he let himself land on the kitchen table chair with a thud.

"Wish I could say I did," Ward said, before leaving the kitchen without another word.

Damon sat there for a good few minutes before realizing nothing was happening. Usually, sitting at the breakfast table was the trigger for his mother to dump a bunch of eggs and bacon in front of him. It had never failed before.

"Where's Mom?" Damon shouted from the empty kitchen. There was no response. "Where's Mom?" Damon repeated, as he walked out into the living room.

"Gone," was Ward only explanation.

"Where?"

"She left with your sisters... And Holly."

"Holly?" Damon looked out the back window to see the coach house empty and dark. He had figured Chip was still out there, waiting for an apology or some nonsense like that.

"So, where did they go?"

"Didn't say. And they didn't say when they'd be back."

Damon scratched the back of his head. "Is this about last night?"

Ward finally looked Damon in the eyes, but only for a moment. "If I were you, I'd find the biggest box of chocolates and the biggest bundle of roses in town and beg for forgiveness from your girlfriend as quickly as possible."

"Not this crap," Damon said with an anguished drop of his shoulders and roll of his red eyes.

"Holly tried to just explain your behavior away, but that girl has put up with a lot of your insensitivity and ignorance for too long, Damon."

"What did she say?"

"Not enough. It was written all over her face. The anguish, the pain, the distress... Even after that fight you had last night, she's been sticking by you. Poor thing."

"It's not like that. Okay? I... Did she actually tell anyone this? Was she angry or something?"

"Your mother and sisters practically had to drag her out of here. You have her head so screwed up she can't even stick up for herself. It's like she's a hostage."

"A very well-paid hostage," Damon said.

"What?"

"Look," Damon ignored his own comment. "She'll get over it. As soon as she can, she'll be back."

"Trudy said she was going to make a room for her to stay with her. I think this is serious, Damon. You might want to swallow your pride and take my advice. It sounded like the girls really want to make you sweat."

Damon took a moment. A moment to clearly think over his options and come to a sensible solution to deal with this problem. Instead, he decided to make it worse. "Okay. Fine. I'm going back to L.A." He turned away to go to the guest room. "You tell Mom and everyone else that I'm not putting up with this bullshiii..." He hung on to the word for a moment, realizing he'd just broken his unspoken pledge to never swear around his family, but he was too angry. "...iii-it!" He emphasized. "If Holly needs me, I'll be back where it's warm, I don't have any fuckin' women to deal with and I can live my life the way I want!"

"Women!" He yelled at the top of his lungs, rattling the china in the living room cabinet.



"Please don't hang up!" Damon heard as he answered his phone.

"If I was going to hang up, I wouldn't have answered, Chip." Damon was leaning against the glass rail of his house patio, overlooking the city of L.A. as the morning sun rose up. It was a spectacular sight. He had just finished fifty laps in his pool and was still drying off, a bit chilly in the morning air, but his body heat was more than a match for it. "Make it quick, I have a zoom with logistics in ten minutes."

It had only been two days, but Damon was back in the swing of SoCal life, enjoying the rays of the sun, the view of the ocean, the silhouettes of the San

Gabriel mountains, the luxuries of his bungalow and the quiet of living alone. Not a wreath or ornament in sight.

"You ready to apologize?" Damon asked.

"It wasn't my idea! I couldn't say no! Mom and your sisters... They got all worked up and before I knew it, I was being set up in Trudy's house!"

"I've said this before. You can say no to them. It's fun. Try it."

"I can't. I want to, but I can't. Mom is so nice. Trudy and Paula are so persuasive. And then there's..."

"Not the voices bullshit."

"They're real!" Chip insisted. "They're trying to make me into a real woman."

"What the ever loving fuck."

"Please listen to me! I'm not lying! I'm not making it up!"

Damon paused, not sure he wanted to hear this. At the very least, he was going to have to pay for Chip's flight out of there, so he was still tied to this mess he had created for himself. "You have thirty seconds to make me believe you."

"It all started when we first got here. I thought it was just the medicine for my throat making me dizzy... But then I started having these dreams... I started seeing myself as a woman in my dreams. Like I really was Holly Garland!"

"There is no Holly Garland."

"I know that... At least... I think I know that."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean... I have a drivers license. For Holly Garland. It has my... *Her* picture and everything."

"Where did you get it?"

"I don't know! It just showed up one day in my purse!"

"Yeah, I'm not hearing what I want to hear, Chip. Even if that were true, it doesn't explain why you're acting like a woman. Like the way you walk."

"That's not my fault! Your mother makes me practice, day after day — walking back and forth, swiveling my hips, keeping my arms raised. Heel toe. Heel toe. I've spent so long doing it, I can't walk any other way now!"

"You can't forget how to walk! That's a load of shit."

"I know it's hard to believe, but it's true! I even feel like high heels are the only shoes I feel comfortable walking in."

"Listen, Chip..."

"That's not all!" Chip added, breathlessly trying to make his case. "I... I..." He reduced his feminine voice to a whisper. "I can't get hard any more."

"Jesus fuck, do you have to tell me that?"

"I know, but... It's been weeks since I've been able to... Well, you know..."

"Jack off?"

"Yes..." Chip verified, weakly.

"Tough shit."

"It's not normal... And I swear to God, I think it's shrinking."

"It's all in your head. Which doesn't sound like it's working right anyway. Just because you don't get boners..."

"It's not normal! I'm only... Thirty..."

"Twenty two."

"Right! I'm only twenty-two! I'm not supposed to have problems like this!"

"Look, my heart bleeds for you, but nothing you've said proves anything. You're still a nutcase."

"I know I'm not thinking straight! That's why I need your help!" Damon was sure he had started crying. "Please help me get out of here... I don't want to wear panties anymore!"

"Y'know, fine. Just walk away. Don't tell anyone you're going. I'll have a ticket for you at the airport and you can use it."

"But I can't!" Chip said.

"That's what you were *just* asking for!"

"But I can't just leave... Mom would be heartbroken."

"She's not your Mom!"

"I just can't leave her, though. And Dad's been so nice... And Trudy and Paula are like my real sisters."

"You were *just* begging to leave."

"Yes, but... Oh, I don't know what to do!"

"Well call me when you make up your fuckin mind!" Damon shouted so loud some birds flew out of nearby tree.



"Well, hello, Holly!" Dr. Tinsley said with his typically warm welcome.

Chip was nervous as a kitten, but didn't dare back out, what with Mrs. Spencer, Trudy and Paula behind him. He was trapped and had nowhere to go.

"Huh... Hello, doctor," Chip replied in his tiniest, most mouse-like voice.

"To what do I owe the pleasure of so many lovely ladies coming to my humble office?"

Mrs. Spencer spoke up first. "Holly here wanted to have a check-up."

"I did?" Chip asked. "No I didn't!"

"You've asked about it, like, about a dozen times today," Trudy said.

"No!" Chip objected.

"Holly, you've said it at least three times in the past hour."

"But I haven't!" Chip objected. "Have I?"

"Well, since you're here, why don't you have a seat in the exam room?" The doctor said.

Looking like he wanted to back out of the office, Mrs. Spencer took command and put her hand in Chip's back and forced him to move ahead. "Go ahead, honey. I want to make sure that you're healthy for the holidays ahead."

"But..."

"This won't take but a minute," the doctor said, leading Chip into the exam room.

When he was left alone, all Chip could think was this was a mistake. While Damon didn't believe him about the voices, he knew they were real — and they became even more intense after he visited the doctor. Especially after.

"Are you comfortable, Holly?" The doctor asked when he came into the small, claustrophobic exam room.

"Uh... I don't know why I'm here."

"You need to relax. Just relax, Holly." He handed Chip a pill, which he swallowed without hesitation. "Why did I just swallow that?" He asked the gregarious doctor Tinsley.

"Because it's what you need," the doctor replied.

The room started to swirl and Chip felt like he had gone through this before. The doctor shined his pen light in Chip's eyes to find them dilated, just as he expected his hypnotic drug to do.

"Now, I wanted to talk to you about this strange fixation you have about wanting to leave Chestnut Cove."

"But I live in L.A. I'm just visiting here."

"Don't you like it here, Chip?"

"Yes, it's nice, but... It's not my kind of place. I like the big city..."

"You like the coziness of a small town, Chip."

"No... I..." Chip's eyes were open, but he was in a deep hypnotic trance.

"Trust me, Chip," the doctor said. "You've always loved small towns. Why, it feels like you've lived here all your life, doesn't it."

"It does?"

"It does. Didn't you have fun at the dance? All those friendly people so happy to see you. You wish your life could be like that every day, don't you?"

"No.. Please.. I don't want to go back to the dance..." Fear washed over Chip's face.

"You didn't like the dance?"

"So many people... Everyone looking at me... They all know I'm not a woman..."

"They would never know. Chip. You're so pretty now. Don't you like being pretty?"

"No! I'm a man... Men aren't... Pretty..."

"But you're pretty, Chip. Maybe you're not a man?"

The distress on Chip's face was plain to see. "I'm a man!"

"No you're not, Chip. Remember the men at the dance, Chip? Those were real men. Big, brawny, muscular men who know how to satisfy a woman."

"I can do that!"

"Oh, I don't think so, Chip. Those men threatened you. They could snap you like a twig. You've never felt smaller and more vulnerable around those men."

"They were scary," Chip said, his voice weak. "But I could have..."

"You wouldn't have done anything. All you can do is cower and beg for the big men not to hurt you. You're better off in panties, Chip."

"No... I'm tough... I really am... I'm a man."

"Chip, we've been over this before."

"But I am a man! I was born a man!"

"Chip, I'm not going to give you another chance."

"I'm not going to let you do this to me! I'm a man!"

"All right Chip, it's time for the device."

Chip looked very distressed, but he didn't move from his spot. He was lying on the exam bench, unrestrained, but he didn't move. The many sessions of hypnotic suggestions had made sure he was incapable of fighting back, and would stay where he was.

The doctor connected electrodes to Chip's temples and to his fingers.

"What..." Chip whimpered. "What does it do…?"

"I'm sorry, Chip, but you know you're not really a man."

"Please, I just need to..."

A gentle buzz of low-voltage electricity ran through Chip's body, barely enough to be felt. However, Chip's hypnotic suggestions had conditioned him

to feel the tingle and interpret it a a deep shock. His body shuddered appropriately.

"You're not a man and never were, Chip."

"P-p-please don't..."

Another buzz. another flinch.

"You aren't a man, are you, Chip?"

"I can't..."

This time, a 9 volt buzz. Chip's mascara began to run.

"No, no! I'm not a man, I never was a man... I don't want to be a man..."

"That's better, Chip."



"Hi, Mr. Thompson!" Chip said as he waved to the man at the grocery counter.

"Well, Hello Holly!" He hoisted a few brown grocery bags and set them on the counter. "Helen's groceries are all packed and ready to go."

"Thanks," Chip replied with a big bright smile. He got a smile back.

Anyone would have smiled at Chip today. He was dressed in an ensemble of grey, with a grey skirted coat, grey tights and grey suede boots with a grey furry cap, scarf and gloves.

"Here, let me get these into the car," Mr. Thompson offered.

"Thank you so much," Chip said. Instead of being offended that a man was assuming he was too weak to do these things for himself, he gratefully accepted.

"There you go, missy. All packed and ready to go."

"Do I owe you anything?"

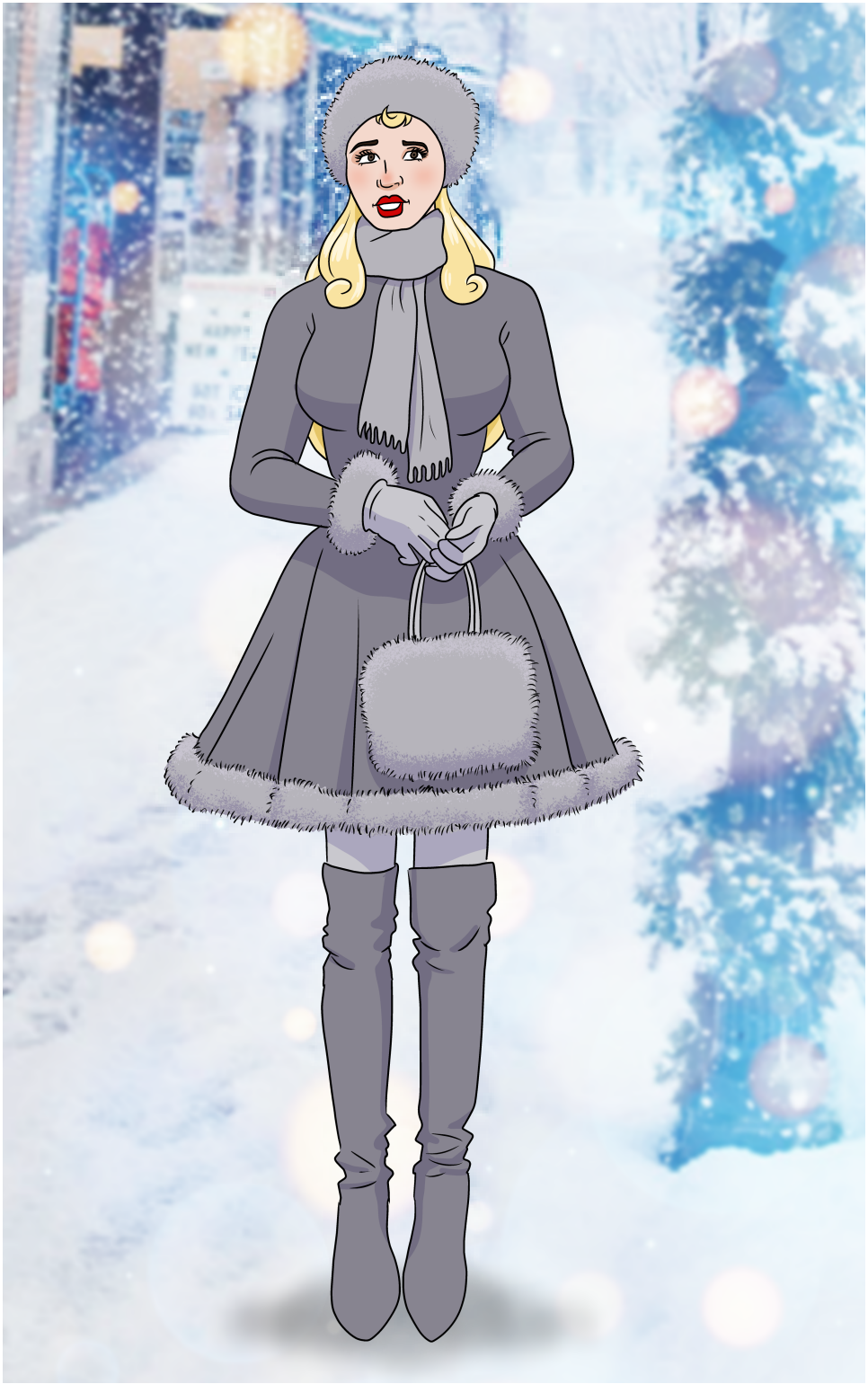
"Just your presence has brightened my day, Holly."

Chip giggled. "No, seriously."

"It's all on account. I'll be seeing you!" The older man quickly returned to the warmth of his store.

Chip got into the family Subaru and marveled at the efficiency and convenience of a small town grocery. Mrs. Spencer just emailed in her grocery list, then everything was ready to pick up, and not a penny needed to be paid. Plus, he didn't have to negotiate the icy sidewalk in his heels carrying heavy grocery bags.

The street was surprisingly busy. Even now, in sub-zero temperatures, temperatures he didn't even know existed as a life-long resident of Southern California, the people were still going about their business, wrapped in scarves and



thick coats, scuffling along leaving puffy clouds of their breath behind.

Even in the cold, though, they were never to much in a hurry to wave hello or stop and chat for a moment. He'd never sen anything like it.

He started up the car and got the heaters going again, but a knock rapped on the window.

"Holly!" The woman who had been knocking said through the glass. "Jill Cooper. From the other night?"

Chip lowered the window. "From the School Christmas Pageant," Chip said, putting a name to the face. He had been taken to the annual Chestnut Cove High School Christmas Pageant by Mrs. Spencer as a way to cheer him up after Damon had left again, and it actually did help. It was fun watching kids stumble through a nativity play, and he met so many townies.

"I know I'm imposing, but..." The woman looked pensive. "I did ask Ward if he'd talk to your boyfriend, but I haven't heard anything."

"About what?" Chip asked, even if he loathed to keep playing the art of Damon's girlfriend.

"Me and my husband... We're selling our Souvenir shop and... We were hoping Damon, because you know he's a wealthy man, he knows a good business opportunity and..."

"You thought he might buy it?"

"Or go in with some other folks... It's a reliable money-maker. The husband and I are going to move to Florida for retirement... And we didn't want to just close it down. It means so much to the community."

"I'm not sure Damon is really into investing... I don't want to get your hopes up."

"Here's our number," Jill Cooper said, handing over a flyer with a picture of the shop on it. "Just in case he might..."

"I'll be sure he gets it," Chip said with a smile.

"Thank you so much, Holly. The mister and I sure do appreciate it."

"No problem. Happy to do it."

Chip put the window back up as Mrs. Cooper left. He idly checked the asking price. It was a measly $100,000. Hell, he couldn't even buy a doghouse in L.A. for $100,000.

On the way home, Chip decided to just look around at the houses, and see what for sale signs there were. He didn't see very many, but when he did, he checked the prices on his phone, he was astonished. The most expensive house in town was $185,000. Even he could afford a house at these prices. He never knew L.A. was so expensive.

He felt a bit cheated, actually. Returning to L.A. and his crappy hovel-like one-bedroom apartment he paid $2700 a month for was going to be miserable.

That million dollars had to be off the table by now, by his figuring. He'd be lucky to get a few thousand out of Damon. Sill, what choice did he have? In a few days, maybe even sooner than that, he'd be back home and trying to figure out how to pay for school and get a new job at the same time. Well, Chip thought, it was all going to come to an end at some point.

"I guess I'm not really looking forward to going home," he said to himself in his soft, melodic feminine voice. He bit his big, puffy red lower lip. In the back of his mind, somewhere, he was also thinking he didn't want to return to his old life. His old, boring, unfulfilling, male life.



It was a quiet evening in the office, Damon taking a moment in the executive gym to jog out some frustration putting together his latest ad campaign. As Damon was sipping from his gallon of ionized spring water, he felt a tap on his shoulder. Damon had a feeling he already knew who it was.

"Damon, I told you what I would do if you came back to work," his partner said. Damon turned around to see the all-too-familiar figure of Carl Liszt, his partner.

Damon didn't stop jogging. "Look, Carl, I... Things got complicated and..."

"And you've successfully avoided me for over a week. However, I'm very aware that you've been putting in 16-hour days lately, and..."

"Come on, Carl! I tried! I couldn't just walk away. Besides, You need me!"

Carl turned off the treadmill with an angry swipe. "We do need you, but you're bound and determined to make us figure out how to run this business when you've been dismissed."

"Carl, no. You can't be serious!"

"Damon, where's Chip Larson?"

"Never met him. What did he do here?"

"The kid hasn't shown up to work in over two weeks. Last thing on his record is you gave him time off for December, for no stated reason, and now his friends can't get in contact with him."

"Still not ringing bell. Sorry."

"Security cams show you and him leaving the building together, and then he disappeared. It's a matter of time before the police are going to get involved. Where is Chip Larson?"

"Yeah, I don't really know what the situation is. I can look into it."

"Damon, you better be able to produce Chip when the time comes. I don't know what the hell you're doing with him, but I pray to God nothing has happened you can't explain."

"Listen, Carl, I honestly have no idea what you're talking about."

"There's a board meeting tomorrow night. I expect you to be there. And if you don't want to be kicked out of here on your lying ass, I suggest you come prepared to defend yourself."

Carl gave him a moment to digest the threat before turning around and leaving, the sound of his expensive Italian loafers on the hard marble floor the only thing making noise as he exited.

There was only one course of action for Damon. He needed to get that idiot intern back to L.A.



Damon was honestly surprised when he saw his mother's face on the screen of his tablet. He had sent his mother a tablet a year ago as a promise that he'd use it for video calls. a promise he'd never fulfilled, nor really intended to. So when she picked up his call, it was a modest shock that she even knew how to use it.

"How is Los Angeles?" His mother asked. "I bet it's warm."

"Yes, Mom, it's warm. Listen, I need to talk to Holly. Is she there?" Damon said, getting to the point of his call.

"Oh, she's around here someplace. I think I can track her down." She got up and exited to the kitchen. This was the limited view the tablet had, of the kitchen door and some shelves.

It had been almost a week since Damon had seen Chip, but his memory was of little help in identifying the person who appeared from the kitchen door.

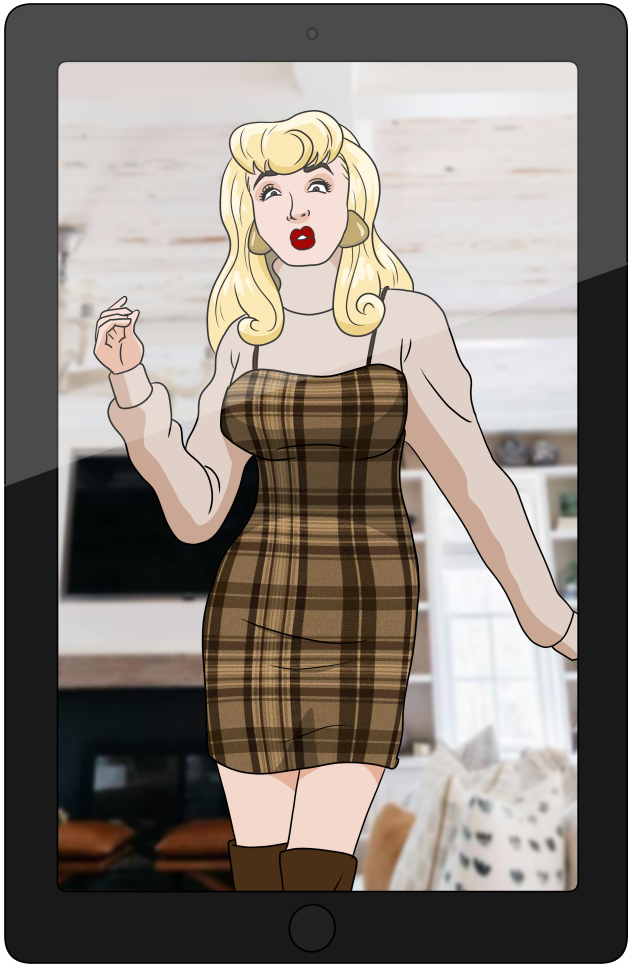
As he exited the door, Chip removed an apron and placed it over the back of the chair, revealing loose beige sweater tucked into a tight check mini-dress.

The dress hugged curves that Chip wasn't supposed to have. He looked amazing in the outfit, every bit a woman as he was pretending to be.

Large earrings danced at the sides of his face glimmering in the light as he straightened his dress.

Sitting down, the first thing he did was separate the loose strands of his long hair with his shiny long-nailed fingers. He had eyeshadow, blush and dark red lipstick that brought out femininity on his face that Damon had never seen before. His lashes, long and dark, danced as he blinked, as his eyes, big and bright, latched onto where the camera was.

Chip didn't look like he was pretending to be a woman anymore. He had mastered the dark feminine arts of beauty.



"Hello, Mr. Spencer," he purred. "How may I help you?"

"Jesus, you look..." Damon was about to lavish Chip with praise for his flawless feminine disguise, but he didn't want anyone to hear him. Even though he had a point he needed to get to urgently, he was still fascinated by Chip's changes. "You look pale."

"It's from being here in Vermont, I suppose."

"Otherwise, you look all right, I guess."

"Thank you, Mr. Spencer."

"Okay, you're pissed with me."

"I'm just an employee, Mr. Spencer. I do what I'm told."

"Don't let anyone hear you!" Damon whispered.

"Does it really matter anymore?"

"Yes!" Damon yelled. "Look, I need you back in L.A. by tomorrow. I've got a ticket waiting for you at the counter in Burlington. The flight is at 6 AM, so you'll need to get started packing as soon as you can. I'll have a car for you at LAX..."

"Damon, I can't leave. The festival is tonight!"

The Christmas Festival was yet another event in the never-ending stream of Christmas celebrations in Chestnut Cove. By his estimation, they started these things sometime in August and they ended in March. As a kid, he had spent many, many boring days sitting in the audience of the Christmas Festival, a kind of talent show for the town.

"Oh no, she can't leave," Mrs. Spencer said, suddenly bolting out of the kitchen, clearly eavesdropping. "Holly is singing for everyone!"

"She's going on stage?" Damon asked, alarmed. "Where everyone can see her?"

"Of course! She's been practicing for days!" Mrs. Spencer turned to Chip. "Why don't you put on the outfit and sing your song for Damon?"

"I... I don't think he wants to hear..."

"Of course he does!" She helped Chip out of his seat. "Come on now, we don't want to keep him waiting."

"It's really okay if..."

"Nonsense, Holly has been working so hard!" The old woman then patted Chip on the butt as he scooted out of frame.

"But the dress!" Chip could be heard objecting.

"Is festive and cheerful!" Mrs. Spencer said.

"Mom," Damon said, as his mother took a seat. "I really need her back in L.A. tomorrow it's important."

"Tut tut! This is much more important. Holly has been so looking forward to this! She has a lovely singing voice once you get her to practice enough."

"How long as she been practicing?"

"Over a week now. You know Mrs. Garsten? She's been teaching Holly. She says Holly's made so much progress. Best student she's ever had."

"Why didn't anyone tell me this?"

"It was a surprise, sweetie. Too bad you have such *urgent* business. Otherwise, you could be here to see her and cheer her on. You'd be so proud of her!"

"Mom, I'm not kidding..."

"Don't forget to change your makeup too, honey!" Mrs. Spencer yelled off screen.

"Mom. Serious business. I need her back in L.A. Everything depends on it."

"Frankly, Damon, I don't know that she or I really care what you *think* is important to you. What's important is to be home for the holidays. To be with family. To share the joy of the holiday season together."

A lifetime of making people fed up gave Damon a keen sense of when he had just done so. "I'll call back."

"You can't even spare the time for a call with your mother?" Mrs. Spencer said.

He was trapped. "Of course I can," he said, dejectedly. "So, uh, thanks for not kicking her out while I'm not there."

"Damon, having her around is the new light of my life," the woman gushed. "She's a wonderful young woman, so full of life and energy. Why, it's like raising another daughter. I cherish every moment she and I get to spend together.

Meeting her is the first good thing you've done since you left home. Did I overhear you say she's an employee?"

"Uh... Uh... Well, we met at work, yes." That was true enough.

"An office romance! How delightful! You know, I met your father that way."

"Yeah, great, I'm glad. She's gonna be leaving tonight, though so enjoy it while you can."

"Well, let's wait for her to decide that for herself, shall we?" Mrs. Spencer said. "You know, I think she's taken quite the shine to Chestnut Cove."

"Is that so?" Damon said, incredulous.

"You might — just might — have to find someone else to keep you warm at night. But I suppose a handsome young man like yourself has the pick of ladies, so it won't be a problem."

"Sure, Mom."

"Maybe get a haircut, though. When's the last time you went to a barber?"

"1994. When the last one went out of business."

"Oh, I think I hear her coming down the hall," Mrs. Spencer said, turning her head.

Damon couldn't see anything as Chip approached, and the expression of awe on his mother's face scarcely prepared him for what he was bout to see.

Mrs. Spencer beckoned him closer. "Come on, don't be shy. Get in front of the camera, Holly."

A blushing Chip side-stepped into frame, looking vey embarrassed. Depending on your point of view, he either had a lot to be embarrassed about, or nothing at all.

Chip was dressed in a costume for his performance, a red dress with white fur trim. It was a standard Christmas costume. For a woman. For a woman trying to show off her body, that is.

The dress was strapless, made of red velvet, and had a short, flirty skirt. The skirt was short enough that panty exposure had to be a constant danger — or perhaps the purpose of it. It danced around Chip's hips as he walked, and even though Damon couldn't see them, the clickity-clack noise Chip made when walking told him that the young man was wearing high heeled boots.

The dress was cinched around his waist with a big black belt that accentuated a svelte body that was much thinner than Damon remembered. While he knew that Chip's chest was just stuffing, it was the perfect balance to the skinny waist, and looked so tempting Damon was tempted to have a feel just to double check. If he was there, of course.

Ih he wasn't very much mistaken, Chip was also wearing red fishnets in addition to a slouchy little Santa hat atop his shiny blond hair.

"You're going to be the talk of the festival!" Mrs. Spencer gushed. "Isn't she just adorable, Damon?"

"She looks absolutely precious. Like a China doll." That comment got a nasty glance from Chip, just as Damon thought it would.

"So sing your song!" Mrs. Spencer said to Chip.

"I don't really want to..." Chip whined.

"Go on! Don't be shy!"

"Please, Mom."

"She really doesn't have to," Damon said, not eager to have to sit through a warbling, embarrassing performance.

"You'll love it! She's really very good. Go on, Holly!"

The look of despair on Chip's face was priceless, and it was all Damon could do to keep from laughing out loud.

Chip cleared his throat and closed his eyes. "Oh holy night..." he sang. "The stars are brightly shining. It is the night of the dear Savior's birth! Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till he appear'd and the soul felt its worth..."

Damon's smile dropped right off his face as he heard Chip render a stunningly perfect rendition of the old Christmas carol. He wasn't just pulling this off, he was nailing it.

As he went on, he started to move his hands, emoting with the song, sweeping his arms as he held notes and stretching his neck as he hit the high notes with the perfection of a skillfully-strung violin.

When he was done, Damon sat there for a moment in silence, flabbergasted that this young man had pulled it off so well. His mother was right. He was going t kill at the Christmas festival, and every man in the audience would be lusting after him.

When his mother began to clap in appreciation, Damon did just the same.

"You're just perfect, sweetie," Mrs. Spencer said.

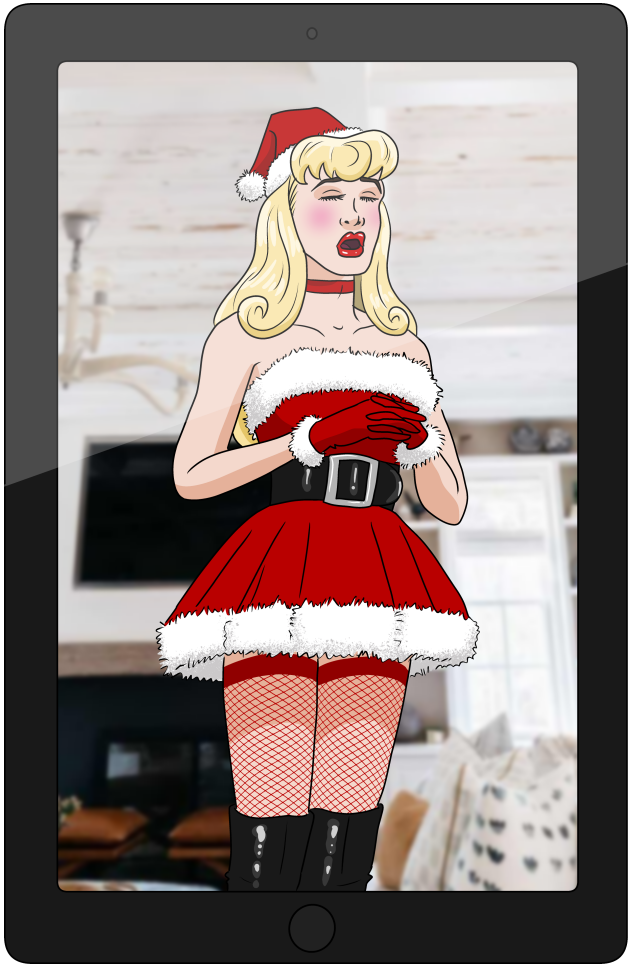
"Thank you, Mom," Chip replied, his face blushing again. He dipped a curtsey, grabbing the hem of his very short skirt. Damon wondered where that had come from, and had to assume it was the work of his meddling mother again.

"Oh, Damon had a question for you!" Mrs. Spencer said, looking at her son through the tablet.

"Uh, yeah. I need you back here ASAP, so when you get here..."

"I can't go!" Chip said. "Everyone is expecting me! I have to sing! All my friends are counting on me!" He looked at Mrs Spencer. "Mom, can I go change?"

"Of course! Be careful not to wrinkle anything!"



Chip dashed away as fast as he could, his heels heavily clattering on the wood floors.

Damon couldn't help but wonder what the phrase "all my friends are counting on me" meant. He didn't have any friends in Chestnut Cove, as far as Damon knew — did he?

"Mom, you can't make her do this. The only reason she'd ever do this is to please you. Trust me, she's extremely embarrassed. No, why not just get her on a plane and..."

"Embarrassed? She picked out the dress! She's been practicing on her own, outside for days. She's really looking forward to it. Holly's just a touch nervous."

As Damon tried to digest that, he noticed that behind his mother, on one of the shelves that were in the frame, there was a new picture frame on display. "Is that a picture of Holly behind you?"

"Oh you noticed!" Mrs. Spencer said, with a tone of voice that indicated she had intentionally put it where it could be seen. "Yes, she went with me to the portrait studio the other day." She picked it up from the shelf and brought it closer to the camera. "I just picked up the final picture this morning, take a look!"

Holding it close to the camera just made it blurry, so Damon had to be patient until she took it back. "She let you do that?" Damon asked.

"Of course! Unfortunately, I don't think it came out all that well. The photos you used to send me doo her much more justice. She looks little off in this portrait. In fact..."

"I'm sure it's not that bad," Damon quickly cut in. He needed to make sure his mother didn't spend another moment on the picture. "You can just put it back. It looks great up there! Hey! How about that weather!"

Mrs. Spencer did put the picture back and returned to the camera.

"It's been very cold. Cold and lonely."

"Fine, fine. Now, about the plane ticket. If you can drive Holly to the airport in..."

"I think my potatoes are ready in the oven, call me when you're headed home for Christmas, all right? Bye honey!"

Without waiting for any kind of reply, the call was ended.

Damon picked up the tablet and shook it. "No! I need that asshole on a plane! Don't..." He let himself go quiet when he realized he was arguing with a pane of glass.

Now he had a real problem. Damon spent a few minutes gnashing his teeth and pounding his desk. He was going to have to find a way to postpone this board meeting, and then he was going to have to go get Chip. There was no way out of it.

The only thing he could do now was to buy himself some time and claim they needed to do this after the holidays. After all, Christmas was just two weeks away. No one wanted to make a trip at this time of year. Rich people, especially.

Damon jumped on his phone to make some very urgent calls to the board members. After two hours, he had done it. He had rescheduled the meeting to the day after Christmas. Until then, he was going to have to work on a plan. A plan to save his company and his fortune.



"He's a jerk!" Chip slurred into his drink. "A no-good stinking jerk!" He said, louder.

"Wow. Watch that language there, missy," Trudy said, sitting next to him. "Gonna get the police called on us."

"No I mean it! He just ditched me! Too busy to come get me! Wait another couple of weeks, he said!"

"Listen, Holly, we didn't bring you here to listen to you go on and on about our brother."

"Yeah! Why did you bring me here? And make me wear this?" Chip was in a tight black turtleneck sweater, a plaid jumper and thigh-high pair of black boots. "I look like a slut."

"You look like you're on the rebound," Paula corrected. "That's why we're here to get your mind off Damon with a new guy. Someone who's good for you, and won't treat you like trash!"

"Whaaat?" Chip replied, nearly falling off the bar stool he was seated on. There were only two bars in Chestnut Cove, and one was closed, so they came here. It was dark, there was old 80's guitar music playing in the background and the patrons were all looking to take someone home that night. "I donn wanna..."

"Have another drink, Holly."

"Okay," Chip said, taking the tall glass of unknown cocktailage with long-nailed fingers.

"Hello, girls," said a man who looked like he was a high-class lumberjack, down to the curled mustache.

"Oh, hey, Jaques!" Trudy said, immediately interested. She exchanged quick glances with Trudy who signaled that this man was "the one" for Holly. "How's the daycare center?"

"Ah, the children love me!" He declared, boldly. "It has never been better for Jaques!"

"Hey Jaques, have we introduced you to Holly Garland?" Paula said, bringing Jaques closer. "She's in town visiting and... She's kind of getting over her ex."

"Hey what?" Chip said, suddenly realizing through his drunken haze that they were talking about him.

Trudy got a wicked little grin on her face. "Yeah... Would you mind looking after her while Paula and I visit the ladies' room?"

"Wait..." Chip said, holing out a slow-to-react hand to keep them from leaving. But by that time, the girls were well on their way.

"So, you had a bad time with a man?" Jaques said. "You must tell Jaques all about it. I am a great listener!"

"I really don't think..."

"You sang at the Christmas Festival!" Jaques said even louder. "Jaques recognizes you! You were *magnifique!* So lovely!"

"I was so embarrassed..."

"Tell Jaques! I am here to listen!" He said as he helped Chip off his stool.

His head swirling, Chip was still able to see what this man was trying to do. "Listen, I know what's going on! You're trying to get me to open up and then you swoop in and try to take me home or something!"

"What were you saying?" Jaques said, holding Chip close as they danced.

Chip looked around, and he was indeed on the dance floor of the bar, dancing to the music. "What? How did...?" He saw Trudy and Paula toasting him from the barstools. He had somehow lost track of time. Chip didn't realize he was *that* drunk.

Needless to say, he tried to push himself away from Jaques, but he was a well-built man who held a firm grip. "Listen, there's misunderstanding," Chip said. "I'm not really... Into.. Dating... And stuff?"

"Ah! Yes! That is certainly something important!" Jaques said. "Let me buy you a drink."

After consuming said drink, it was somehow important — from Chip's impaired perspective — to accept Jacques' offer of a ride home in his Tacoma truck. It also was them important for Chip to let Jaques feel him up, run his hand up Chip's smooth thigh and let him smell the boots.

The boots part was weird to Chip, even while he was blitzed.

Then, Chip couldn't help but notice that while Jaques was pressing him into the cushioned seat by laying on him, this had not prohibited the truck from moving down the dark road at a high rate of speed.



"She's awake," said the voice Chip couldn't see. It was just backness.

"Holly! Holly?" Said a voice Chip recognized as Helen Spencer. "Can you hear us?"

"Her ears are fine, Mom," said a voice Chip figured was Trudy. "It's the rest of her that's kind of messed up."

Hearing that, Chip began to struggle, but he seemed bound in place.

"No, no, honey," Mrs. Spencer said. "Don't move. The doctor says you need to just rest."

Paula spoke. "Yeah, Holly. You sure got yourself all busted up. Don't move."

"What... Happened?" Chip said with a voice that hadn't been used in quite a while.

"Car accident," Trudy explained. "The doc found you and got you out of the wreck. He got you back to the office and fixed you up."

"Now don't you worry," Mrs. Spencer said. "The girls and I are going to look after you while you recover. We'll take care of your every need. Just lie there and..."

"Don't tell Damon..." Chip croaked. "He'll doesn't..."

Trudy nodded in agreement. "Don't worry, we won't tell him. He deserves to stew a bit longer."

Mrs. Spencer spoke again. "Now the doc said it'll be a couple of weeks, but you should be all healed up by Christmas. Until then, don't lift a finger."

"Okay, Mom," Chip replied before falling asleep for the next two days.



Damon Spencer was driving in the snowy roads outside of Chestnut Cove, a man of many emotions. All of them negative.

He had just been through 10 days of excruciating torture, in seemingly never-ending meetings. They were difficult as everyone else in his business could smell blood in the water. They were standing up to him, pushing back on his directives, and sometime not even acknowledging him. Word had gotten out that his position at the company was in jeopardy, and he might be stepping down from his executive role.

But by bit, he could feel his grip on the agency falling through his fingers. His partner had done what he had promised to do. It was all going to be taken away from him. He could be literally bankrupt and penniless in just a few days.

Now he had to find a way to get it all back. He could use the savings he had, the equity in the house, the summer house and the investment portfolio to build a fund that he could use to leverage a buy-out. He could hire some lawyers to sue the firm into returning him to his position. He could steal his partner's greedy wife and force a divorce and a split of ownership.

Honestly, he hadn't felt this energized in years. Revenge and destitution was a fantastic motivator.

As he passed by the all-too-familiar Chestnut Cove town sign, he decided he needed to get something to eat. He had a few hours to kill before he'd be able to get into the house, and he was only going to get hungrier.

His plan was to arrive unannounced, and slip in to steal Chip away before anyone really noticed. His family always held a big Christmas Eve party, inviting all the neighbors and some of the townies, and it was the best chance of getting Chip out without causing a stir.

He needed Chip back in L.A. to prove there was no issue with his so-called disappearance. Damon was sure the stupid kid would be grateful, and he didn't expect a lot of fuss. Then, he'd get him in the car and send his Mom a text or something about taking his "girl" away for a surprise romantic vacation or something stupid that they'd eat up.

The little store he stopped at had only a limited supply of healthy snacks, and virtually nothing fresh to eat. That wasn't much a surprise. What was a surprise was to hear the harpy voices of Trudy and Paula coming through the front door. With an instinct driven by a childhood of hiding from his sisters, he ducked low behind a shelf to avoid being seen.

"What I don't understand is why she would feel embarrassed," Trudy said as she came inside from the cold.

"I mean, I can understand why you'd feel chilly in a skirt that short, but not embarrassed." Paula added. "She looks incredible. If that's what you look like after a car accident, smash me into a telephone pole."

Damon glanced around a corner to see his sisters. They were dressed in stylish outfits that was frankly way too good for a burg like this – and the skirts were scandalously short.

"Remember what Mom always says," Trudy continued.

"You have nothing to be embarrassed about when you're beautiful," they said in unison, followed by some muted giggling.

"I have to say, that skank really made me up my game." Paula said, pulling at the short skirt of her jacket.

"Yeah, no way am I going to let Holly become the hottest single girl in town."

"The bitch is gonna have competition!" Paula said, giving her sister a high-five.

As they turned their backs and headed down an aisle, Damon took his opportunity and dashed out behind them. He didn't want to be seen just yet, and wanted the element of surprise if and when he had to confront someone.

He still had hours to kill, so he spent the majority of it wondering how in the hell Chip was now "the sexiest woman in town" and looked "great" after a car accident. The more he thought about it, the less it made sense.



Parked down the street from his family home, Damon waited for the sun to set and the lights of the Spencer house to light up.

He watched the guests arrive, with presents and wine, being greeted by his mother — but once and a while, someone else. It was too far to tell, but could it be Chip? At the very least it wasn't the overly familiar figures of his sisters and mother. So it had to be Chip.

Watching guests go into the house was almost like watching clowns pile into a car at the circus. There seemed far more people going in than the house could hold. Still, it did look warmer than his rental car.

When the parade of well-bundled guests slowed to a trickle, it was time to make the move. Damon got out of the car, trudged through the snow and went around back of his house. There was a rear entrance to the basement, and he had been jimmying the lock on it since he was 11.

He then snuck up to the inner basement door, which led out into the kitchen. He had decent view of the whole kitchen from here, with the door open just a

crack. All he needed to do was wait for Chip to be by himself, and then get him out of there, no one the wiser.

He was in luck, as Chip entered in just a couple of minutes after Damon set up behind the door. He was checking on something in the oven and was humming a little song to himself.

Seeing Chip's appearance was a shock Damon was utterly unprepared for. This wasn't the Chip he knew. This wasn't even the person he'd abandoned out here in Vermont. This was a person who had no connection with masculinity. He was beautiful and delicate, poised and graceful, elegant and fair.

"What... What did you *do* to yourself?" Damon whispered. He looked at Chip like he was some kind of exhibit on display at a museum, to be viewed at every angle, considered and contemplated.

He was wearing a deep-neck red top with long sleeves with a flirty black skirt cut irresponsibly short. Black tights and a pair of suede black pumps blended into each other. The outfit was simple, but Chip's body didn't need anything fancy to showcase his curvy, alluring figure.

Chip's long blond hair was held in place with a big black velvet ribbon, and spilled over his shoulders like streams of gold. Damon wished he could see his face clearly, but he couldn't.

Damon pushed the door open, but just as he did, the kitchen door creaked, and Damon quickly closed his door once more.

In came Jaques, however, this was someone Damon had never met before. Damon took note of the way the man with the curly mustache walked up to Chip and got real close. Too close.

"Mon cherie," Jaques said to Chip.

Chip faced him and smiled. "What's up?" He asked, resting his slender hand on Jaques's chest. Finally able to see Chip's face, Damon was shaken. Chip's face had become the very picture of femininity, with big, bright eyes, round cheeks, and a heart-warming smile. Was it just makeup or... Had it actually changed? Damon couldn't say.

"Jaques is hoongry," said the brawny man in his French Canadian accent.

Chip was alarmed. "Are we out of nuts?"

"Jaques is looking for more than teeny tiny noots. I have a hoonger!"

"Well, dinner's about fifteen minutes away."

"Very well, Jaques will wait!" He declared. He went back through the kitchen door, creating a momentary burst of noise from the guests chatting in the living room. "Fifteen minootes?" He asked again.

"Fifteen minootes," Chip reassured.



Damon waited a moment to make sure they were alone, but he waited too long and Chip trotted out back into the party.

"About fifteen minutes," Chip said to Mrs. Spencer as she passed by, headed into the kitchen.

"Oh, good," the old woman said as she headed to the cabinet to retrieve some more glasses. She gathered up three or four before she sighed and out her hands on her hips.

"Damon, would you please stop hiding and say hello to people," the veteran mother said, exasperated. She didn't even bother to turn to look, instead getting some forks from a drawer. "Been pulling that basement trick for who knows how long."

"You know about that?"

"I've known since you were ten or eleven," she said, as she turned to face him. "Now, why are you sneaking into your poor mother's home without telling me, honey?"

"Uh... I wanted it to be a surprise?"

"Well, consider this a success then. Trying to hive me a heart attack."

"He... Uh.. Holly looks different."

"Well, now," Mrs. Spencer said, looking reluctant. "Something happened while you were gone."

"What do you mean?"

"Here, see for yourself," Mrs. Spencer held up her phone.

"Why are you showing me these pictures?" Damon said, confused. "Who's the mummy?"

"I promised her I would wait, but... Oh, I really shouldn't be doing this... Don't tell her that I..."

"Mom! Who is this?"

"It's Holly."

"Wait... This is Holly?"

"Please don't tell her I told you..."

"What the hell happened?" He was looking at a pic of a person wrapped in bandages nearly from head to toe.

"Now don't get excited. It was just a little fender bender."

"A fender bender? It looks like it..."

"It's not as bad as it looks. Doc Tinsley said it was some cracked ribs, abrasions to the chest and face, and a contusion to the lower body. These pictures were taken when she first came home. She's much better now. You'd never know she was in an accident at all."

"What the heck? Why didn't someone tell me!"

"She was feeling a little embarrassed, I think..."

"Someone should have said something! I mean, she looks... I mean, she doesn't look like she was in a car accident."

"Doc Tinsley is a miracle worker!" Mrs. Spencer said with a big smile. "Don't say anything, but, I think she's even prettier after the accident."

Doc Tinsely sure seemed to be involved in Chip's life a lot, Damon mused to himself. After that awkward and confusing discussion they had at the Christmas Dance, he had been suspicious of his motivations. Now, he was sure he was up to something. But what?

"Now, go say hello to everyone," Helen said to her son.

"Hey, I just came because..." He flipped through his mental list of possible excuses. "Because I really gotta make good with Holly."

"You came to apologize?"

"That's what I'm doing. That's why I'm here. I was hoping I could sneak him... Her out of here and y'know, take her somewhere for a... Romantic? Christmas?" For a man who made a living selling his ad campaigns to multi-billion dollar corporations, he was really screwing up selling this load of crap to his mother.

"Oh, that sounds lovely," Mrs. Spencer said, smiling. "A proposal, maybe?"

Damon shrugged. "Sure, why not?" he answered. He would tell his mother exactly what she wanted to hear, if it meant he could just grab the kid and get out of here.

His mother was clearly daydreaming about young love as she got something out of a nearby drawer. "Here. Just in case you need this."

She handed her son a wadded-up piece of silk fabric. "For what?"

"It's been in the family for years. Your father used it to propose to me."

Knowing what it was, he unwrapped the fabric anyway. Inside was a ring. An engagement ring.

"Just in case," she said, before leaving.

Damon grumbled and stuffed the ring and the paper towel in his pocket.

"But it's not so simple, I'm afraid." She beckoned her son to follow her to the door that led to the living room. She pushed it open a few inches, where the both of them could see a few of the guests.

"What am I looking at?" Damon asked, unable to understand why he was peeking out into the crowded living room. He couldn't see much at all.

What he did see, however, was an arm draped around Chip's waist.

"Who *is* that guy anyway?" Damon asked.

"You probably haven't met Jaques. He moved into town a couple of years ago to start a hardware store. That didn't work out, so he turned it into a daycare center. Makes a decent living, I hear. He's very good with children."

"Wait, wait, wait," Damon said. "Are you telling me that they're a... *Couple?*"

"Well, no. Not yet. It's just their second date. And he was the one at the wheel for her accident, so I'm not sure that counts as a date, really."

"I need to talk to... Her."

"So, go talk!"

Damon quickly pictured the scene: Boldly walking up to push Jaques aside to claim.... His male intern. No way was he going to get into a scuffle for Chip.

"Nah. Um... You get her. Bring her in here. I... Uh... Don't want to be seen by other people."

"Goodness gracious, Damon!" She exclaimed in exasperation. "I raised you to be more assertive!" She sighed a heavy, soul-crushing motherly sigh. "Very well. I'll see what I can do."

Then she turned around. "Honestly, Damon." She frowned and headed back out into the party.

A minute later, Chip came in, agasp at what he saw. Apparently, Mrs. Spencer had not clued him in on why he needed to go to the kitchen.

"Damon!" Chip said, with a tone of both shock and anger.

It was then that both their eyes met at the same fixed point: Chip's cleavage. His deep neck top wasn't as obvious to Damon when he was hiding in the closet.

"Holy fuck, is that real?" Damon inquired. "I mean... *those*. Are those real?"

"Let's go into the bathroom," Chip said, grabbing Damon by the arm and taking to the rear door. "We can't talk here."

Immediately after entering the bathroom, Chip turned on the shower.

"Why...?"

"They can't hear us when the shower is on!"

"Oh man, you've lost your mind."

"I know I'm losing my mind!" Chip shrieked. "And you weren't here to help me, you fucking coward!"

The small room was quickly filling up with steam, but not before Damon could get a better look at Chip. He was so different.

Not just in a cosmetic kind of way, but in a fundamental kind of way. His mannerisms were feminine, using his hands when he talked, touching Damon softly intermittently, and keeping his arms up and bent even when he wasn't using them.

Just the way he carried himself was different, balancing himself on four inch stilettos and pushing his chest forward as he stood.

It also couldn't be missed that his low-cut top was exposing two round, fleshy mounds in what Damon had to believe was some kind of illusion.

Then there was his face. It wasn't Chip's face anymore.

"Why do you look like that?"

"You think I had a choice?" Chip said. "I woke up after the accident and... I looked like... *Her.*"

"Her?"

"Holly Garland!" Chip said. "Those photos you sent Mom... I look just like her. Down to the freckle."

Damon got his phone out and referenced his photo library of spare "Holly Garland" images, stockpiled to be used for messages to his mother. He held the phone up to Chip's face to compare them side-by side.

"Do you have to?" Chip asked.

"Shush!" Damon said, as he compared the two feature-by-feature.

Chip had a thinner, smaller nose now. His lips were the same thickness and shape at the photos. His jaw was thinner and pointier, and his eyes had the same slightly-oval shape. The very same things the girl in his photos had.

And he was right — he even had the same freckles in the same pattern. He was now a carbon copy of Holly Garland.

"Holy shit," Damon muttered.

Chip pushed Damon's arm down to get him to stop staring at him and the phone. "When I woke up from my accident, I was... Different."

"Yeah, I'll say!" He said, noting that he had a thinner body, thinner arms and legs and an even thinner and more slender neck.

"You've got to get me out of here before I completely give in! I don't want to be Holly Garland anymore!"

"I've tried to get you out of here before," Damon said with a sneer. "And you've come up with excuses every time."

"It's your fault!" Chip said, angrily. "You promised me all I had to do was pretend to be her! Now I *am* her! Holly Garland doesn't want to leave!"

"You're not Holly Garland!"

"I know... But eery time I look in the mirror... There she is! Holly is looking back at me!"

"Wait... Why would a car crash change your appearance..."

"I don't know!" Chip cried. He seemed to be tearing up. "I don't even know if there *was* a crash. I think they just did these surgeries to me, and made the whole thing up."

"Who?"

"I don't know that either!" Chip said. "All I know is I have all these thoughts in my head... I don't even know what my own thoughts are anymore. It's like there's a woman inside of me, controlling me... Holly Garland is real, and she's in my mind!"

"All right, you *are* nuts." Damon grabbed the door handle. "And I know who did this."

"Well, hey! Look who showed up!" Philip Dubois said when he saw Damon emerge from the kitchen. Philip slapped him on the back, overestimating the depth of their relationship. "Are you wet?"

"No," Damon said, sourly. "It's *mist."*

He continued on his way to gab a drink from a tray of liquor that had been left out.

Unfortunately for Damon, Philip had followed him. "Something eating you? It's Christmas! Well, tomorrow, at least. It's the feel-good day of the year!" The chipper middle-aged man said.

Damon turned around and thrust his finger in Philip's face, ready to make a point about how having your company stolen from you, having to spend the last month with people he hated and a nutcase pretending to his girlfriend was not the making of a feel-good day. Damon put his finger away, knowing that even if this putz was able to understand any of what he was saying, Philip was too much of a simpleton to think it was worth worrying about.

Fortunately, Damon found the one thing he could use him for. Info. "Is Doc Tinsley here? I have a question for that bastard."

"Sure! He and your father..."

"*Step*-father."

"All right, step-father, were chatting about trains. I think I saw him head to the garage to take a look at his model railroad."

Damon was about to dash off to the garage, but he had two more questions for Philip.

"Have you noticed anything odd about Holly?"

"Only how incredibly hot she is," Philip said. "Sorry if that's inappropriate."

"You have no idea how inappropriate that is." Damon muttered. "The accident that Holly had in town. Did..."

"Holly had an accident?" Philip asked.

Damon had to be more specific, apparently. "A car accident."

"First I've heard of it."

Damon thought about this. It was too small a town for something like this to go unnoticed. If someone tripped on the sidewalk, everyone would know in a few hours. "You haven't heard anything about it at all?"

"Nope? She okay?"

"You came here alone, didn't you."

"That's me! Forever the loner!"

"Well, I'll let you get more practice in," Damon said as he moved away.

"What a card!" Philip said with a laugh.

Grumbling, Damon headed for the garage.

"Well, hello there, stranger!" Ward said when Damon got into the bare-walled garage. Ward and Doc Tinsley were looking over a large diorama of a hilly tunnel-laden miniature railroad.

"Leave," Damon said to Ward, with an intensity that no one could oppose. He fixed his gaze on the doctor.

"Okey-dokey!" Ward replied with a chuckle. "You staying for charades? We do a lot of party games ever year..."

"Now!"

"See you inside, Doc!" Ward said as he headed out.

As the door closed, Damon squared up his shoulders, facing the rotund doctor.

"I had been hoping to see you again, Damon," Doc Tinsley said, merrily. "You exercising regularly? Eating well? Getting enough sleep?"

"What are you up to, fat man?" Damon asked.

"And a merry Christmas to you too, my boy."

"There was no accident. Holly was never in any car accident."

The doctor shook his head. "Oh, yes! Holly. Poor thing came to me in quite a state," the doctor said. "I fixed her up, so she can live a normal life. You should thank me."

"There was never a Holly Garland. I made her up."

"Take a look with your own eyes, son. Holly Garland is hosting this party. Of course she's real."

"What have you done? What did you do to the man I brought here three and a half weeks ago?"

"I don't remember seeing any new male patients. The only new patient I've had identified herself as Holly Garland. 34. Caucasian. I treated her for a sore throat. Then, two weeks ago, I healed her recent injuries."

"There were no injuries. There was no accident." Damon approached slowly. "People around here have no knowledge of an accident. You did something intentional to Chip Larson. Something — or maybe a lot of things — that have changed him."

"Well, I think you'll find, with a little investigation that a report was filed about the accident. It's official."

"A medical report, I bet. Signed by you?"

"I signed it, yes. That's my job. But Holly Garland has a birth certificate and a drivers license. She's as real as you or I."

"And I guess a *motivated* doctor can fabricate the right information to create a birth, an official record of a person's birth and arrange for a license." Damon picked up a small piece of wood from Ward's workbench and began twirling it around in his hands. "Why would you do this to someone?"

The doctor laughed and adjusted his glasses. "Why would a son torture his loving mother for decades, pretending like cared one whit about her? Why would he tease her, get her hopes up, string her along for years and years, telling her he had a woman in his life, a woman who he intended to marry? That's a very cruel thing to do to the wonderful woman who gave birth to you and loved you from the day you were born."

"Listen you old shit, I know you have a hard-on for my Mom..."

"Your mother is the best thing in your life, and you treat her like scum you scrape off the soles of your shoes!" The doctor said, suddenly raising his voice. "She deserves better than a selfish, negligent son!" The doctor gathered himself. "She deserves whatever I can give her to make her happy."

"You've mangled a perfectly healthy man into... Whatever you call Holly Garland."

"If I have anything to answer for, I'll answer to God — and not you, young man." The doctor walked past Damon and didn't turn around. He left the garage feeling even colder than it had before.

Damon had a lot to think about. However, true to his nature, he decided to skip over thought and go straight to action.

He headed back into the house, ready to stir things up. He was determined to get that kid to come back with him to L.A. tonight — even if he did look like a woman — and he'd sort it out when they touched down.

The first thing he saw when he returned to the living room was Dr. Tinsley whispering into Chip's ear. As soon as he saw Damon, though, he stopped and retreated into another part of the house.

"What did he say to you?" Damon demanded to know as he approached.

"What?" Chip replied. "Who?"

"The doctor!"

"He just wanted to say hello," Chip replied. "Why are you so upset?"

"We have to go," Damon shouted at Chip. "It's time to leave."

"Excusez-moi!" Jaques said interrupting the conversation he was having and turning back to Chip and Damon. "There's no need to shout at her."

"Jaques, no!" Chip said to the man. "It's... All right."

"Eet is not all right!" Jaques said. "He is rooode!"

"I need to talk to you," Damon said to Chip, ignoring Chip's defender. The young man's lovely, feminine face was a mix of emotions. He looked with his big, wide eyes back and forth between Damon and Jaques, unsure as to what to do.

"I... I'll be back," Chip said to Jaques.

"No!" Jaques said, grabbing Chip's slender wrist. "You do not need to go!"

"But..." Chip wrestled with Jaques's grip.

"Come on!" Damon demanded.

"Please, please, don't make a scene," Mrs. Spencer said, rushing to the loud voice of her son. Her please forced Jaques to release Chip, and he immediately headed for the kitchen.

Damon gave Jaques a look over his shoulder as he followed Chip.

"What was that all about?" Damon growled as they got through the door. "What are you trying to do?"

"Let's go outside," Chip said, worried that Damon's voice could still be heard by the guests.

"It's freezing!"

"It's just for a minute."

Chip flicked on the light to the rear patio, which had been freshly shoveled of snow. "Why are you making this so difficult, Chip? We have to go back. You know what."

"But it's Christmas Eve! Just... We could stay and..."

"I have a meeting on Monday morning with the Board of Directors, and if I don't prove that you're alive and well, I can kiss everything I've earned good-bye." He grabbed Chip by his shoulders. "And that million dollars along with it!"

"Isn't it pretty outside?" Chip said, looking around. "It's so peaceful. No cars honking, no one shouting at you to work harder..."

"Chip! Come on!"

"Your family has been so nice to me. I can't ever imagine just leaving. Surely, you're not asking me to just..."

"You were begging me to get you out of here only ten minutes ago!"

"Why would I ever want to leave here? It's so nice... When you wake up in the mornings, you can hear the snowbirds chirping as the sun peeks over the mountains..."

"You live in Los Angeles, Chip. You were born there."

"Have you ever cooked? Made a meal for a family that really appreciates you? There's really nothing quite like it. I love cooking. Shopping, finding a recipe, gathering ingredients, prepping, experimenting, tasting... I so love it."

"So you have a new hobby. Great. You're allowed to cook in L.A., you know."

"And shopping for clothes with my sisters is..."

"They're my sisters. You don't have sisters."

"We go shopping almost every day. There are so many lovely things to buy... Cozy, comfy clothes... I do love wearing so many pretty clothes."

"You're not even a woman, Chip! You're a man! A man doesn't wear feminine things!"

"Why can't I wear pretty clothes? I was born to wear pretty clothes. That's what Mom says."

"She's *my* mom! It's *my* family! You're Chip Larson!"

"Who's Chip Larson?"

"Don't kid around, Chip..."

"Oh yes, Chip Larson. Wasn't he the intern that came here with you?"

"No, you're Chip Larson. You know that."

"Shame he never recovered from that car accident."

"There was no car accident! You're Chip Larson! You have to remember that!"

"What?" Chip said, suddenly fearful. "I... Of course I'm Chip Larson... I know that..."

"It's that doctor, isn't it? He messed with your head just as much as he messed with your body! You have to know that you're Chip Larson."

"Yes, yes... I'm sorry. I just got a little spacey there..."

"Okay, now we need to get you on a plane and back where you can get your head straight."

"Yes, of course..."

"Then let's go. I have a car." Damon grabbed him by the arm, and Chip let him.

"But what about Jaques?"

"What about him?"

"I can't break his heart. We're on a date tonight."

"A date?"

"Your sisters set me up... I've been seeing him. Just a few times..."

"What do I care? He's an ass. Come on." He tugged on Chip's arm again.

"I'm not leaving. I'm not going to destroy your mother's faith and..."

"My mother." Damon didn't need to say any more. If he did yank Chip away, he'd be destroying what was left of their tenuous relationship. Besides, he still had his motive for getting in this mess in the first place. "I can still get her off my case."

"What do you mean?"

"Follow me here," Damon fished in his pocket for the silk wad. "We can kill two birds with one stone." He unwrapped the ring his mother had given him. "If I'm engaged to Holly, Jaques will give up, my Mom will get off my case, and we can tell her we're off for a romantic vacation. Eloping and all that bullshit. How's that sound?"

"I don't want to just run out of here like we're deserting them."

"You can come back here any time, okay? We'll be engaged, as far as my family's concerned. Okay? How about that?"

"I mean, okay. I guess?" Chip considered the idea. "It's the only way out of this mess, isn't it? So, let's try it."

"Perfect! Here you go," Damon handed Chip the ring.

"Wait, no. You can't do it like that."

"Like what?"

"You have to do it the right way!" Chip said. "Like a real proposal."

"Come on, Chip."

"Do it! Please?"

Damon sighed. "Fine. Will you..."

"On your knee! Like you're supposed to do."

"Fuck, no."

"I'm not going to go until you do!"

Damon was too eager to leave to put up a fight. He went down on one knee and presented the ring. "I'm going to get you back for this."

"Say the words!"

"Will you marry me?" Damon said through gritted teeth and holding the ring up.

Chip slid his finger through the ring swiftly.

"Are you happy now? Can we go?"

"Happy," Chip said with a smile.

"Can we go back in now? I'm getting frostbite." Damon asked.

"Yeah, sure," Chip replied.

"Now, get a coat. My car's outside."

"I have to say goodbye to everyone, okay?"

"I'm just going to send them a text. Let's get to the car."

Before Damon could stop him, though, Chip sped ahead and ran back into the living room.

Damon followed, needing to grab Chip and drag him to the car, if necessary.

"He asked me! He asked me!" Chip said, displaying the engagement ring on his slender hand to the crowd.

In a flash, the women in the room rushed to surround Chip, who seemingly swept him away as they all wanted to see the ring and congratulate "Holly."

"No!" Damon said, trying to grab him back, but he couldn't do anything.

"We have to take pictures!" Mrs. Spencer said.

"I gotta get some too," Trudy said. "And you have to tell us all about it!"

"Did he get down on one knee?" Paula asked, breathlessly.

As they swarmed, Damon was being practically pushed out of the room. and into the hallway. He could see a dejected Jaques leave, accompanied by Dr. Tinsley, patting the muscular man on the back.

Deciding he had to stage a strategic retreat, and let the women do what they were going to do, Damon returned to the guest room. However long this was going to take for Chip to get free of the girls, he'd have to come back here.

The next thing Damon could remember, someone was giggling. He opened his eyes, and the first thing he saw was a clock. It was two in the morning. He had fallen asleep waiting for Chip.

Then he could sense warmth. Someone was in contact with him. Someone, in fact, was sitting on him. He turned his head and saw Chip, unbuttoning his shirt.

"What are you doing Chip?" Damon said, half amused and half asleep.

"It's a big night for us. I want us to remember it for a long long time." Chip grabbed at Damon's shirt, pulling down like he was shucking an ear of corn.

"Knock it off, and get... Dressed?" Damon looked over his intern a little closer. He was wearing a pair of knit thigh-high socks and a matching knit sweater with a wide neck that exposed both his slim, milky shoulders. And that was it.



"What the fuck?"

Chip smiled hungrily. "I'm not getting dressed, Damon. And neither are you."

The half-removed shirt acted like a straitjacket, pinning Damon's arms to his sides. Chip started working on the fly of Damon's pants, and the executive started to thrash around, trying to free himself.

"No, stop joking around, Chip," Damon said, as he wriggled.

"Does it look like I'm kidding, baby? I've been waiting to get my hands on that cock of yours for so long. Now that I've got your down payment," he showed the ring on his finger, "I want to see what I'm buying."

"Stop it. Really."

"Nope. Sorry. We're going to do this."

"Chip! Come on!"

"Stop calling me that. Chip isn't going to make you cum tonight. Holly is." Chip broke through the pants' clearly insufficient defenses and got his hand inside to feel around.

Feeling Chip's long nails on his disk, it redoubled Damon's attempts to top him, and he began to scoot back on the bed.

"You're trying to fight me, baby?" Chip said with a smile. He made a quick cross-armed removal of the sweater, exposing the perfectly round C-up globes that hung from his chest. They bounced and swayed there, taunting Damon's eyes. "You don't want to get your hands on these?"

"Oh, God," Damon said, seeing what he knew was there in the flesh. He knew that there were breasts under Chip's dress, but he had resisted the idea of even picturing them. Now he couldn't avoid thinking about them any longer.

"You don't know how good this feels," Chip said, drawing the tips of his nails around the outer rim of his big, dark nipples. His eyes narrowed as enjoyed the sensation. "I just wish you were the one doing it."

"This isn't you, Chip. It's not you talking. It's what that doctor did to you!"

"Of course it's me talking. I don't see anyone else here. So it must be me. And I want that cock of yours in every hole I have tonight."

"Get ahold of yourself, Chip! You're not thinking straight!"

"You don't think these are too big for me, do you?" Chip said, pushing his big breasts out and together. "Paula said I'm just the right size, but Trudy thinks they're too big." He leaned forward onto Damon, bringing his boobs even closer. "I really want to know your opinion."

Damon, even as distressed as he was, was tempted to look for the surgical marks. He needed to prove that this was Chip, while his stiffening dick was declaring itself uninterested in such details.

"Do you like girls with big breasts?" Chip asked, teasingly. Chip moved onto all fours, suspended over Damon. "Mom said that it's the girl, not the boobs, but I think she was just trying to be diplomatic."

"I need to talk to Chip," Damon said.

"I don't know why you keep bringing that name up." Chip said, kissing Damon on the nose. "If you want, you can go looking for Chip, or you can fuck Holly. Your choice."

"He's you. You're Chip. You can't keep denying it."

"Hmmm. Is this some kind of kinky game you're playing? I can pretend to be Chip for you. What's he act like?"

"You're him. You know."

Chip shook his pretty head and his long hair flew around. "Not really. But, I'll try... Hi, Damon, it's your faithful intern Chip here! You wanna do some business stuff?"

"Chip needs to get off me and get ready to leave," Damon said. He knew he was just being yanked around, but it was all he had.

"Sorry, Mr. Spencer, sir!" Chip replied. "I'm think I'm going to be working from home today." He was finally able to rip open Damon's pants.

Damon finally just let himself lose his shirt in exchange for getting his hands back. He grabbed Chips' forearms before he could get much farther in undoing his underwear. "Stop!" he yelled.

"Please don't write me up, Mr. Spencer!" Chip said, mockingly. "I'm just trying to enhance company assets!" He wriggled his shapely ass.

"Stop acting like this! This isn't you!"

Chip finally made a frustrated, sour face. "Not me? Try telling that to Mom and Trudy and Paula and Ward and all the people who I've been meeting and talking to around town. Holly Garland is the new girl in town!" Chip looked pleased with himself. "I have an account at the grocery, I have my own license, I even got my own credit card coming in a few days. I'm no one *but* Holly Garland!"

"You know that's not true!"

"All I know is that I can't wait to go out with my besties, Trudy and Paula and start looking for the perfect wedding dress, Damon! I'm going to marry you, and I'm going to be the most beautiful bride this town has ever seen!"

"You hate Trudy and Paula!"

"They're family, silly! I love them like they were my own sisters."

"They're the worst. You said that several times. You know that's the truth."

"Shut up and fuck me, okay? Or are you too scared?"

Pushed, Damon needed to take charge of the situation. In front of him was a man with the deepest identity crisis one could imagine. A young man of twenty-two who had been roped into this, and changed beyond recognition.

Well, not beyond recognition, really. Damon did recognize her. The girl who was Holly Garland. There was a reason he had picked the internet girl's pictures, after all. She was beautiful. One of the most beautiful women he'd ever seen. Now she was on top of him. Or, someone who looked like her was. The problem for Damon was, he had already been in love with "Holly Garland" for years. Now here she was. A dream made real.

So it came down to this. Chip or Holly.

With one swift motion, Damon's arm pushed Chip's whole body against the wall, and pinned him up by the neck with his forearm.

"You don't want it from me, you stupid idiot! You have no idea what I do when I'm going to fuck a girl! You don't want to know."

Chip was unable to make a comeback, as his larynx was being squeezed by Damon, and he was making gagging noises as he clawed against Damon's arm.

"A woman can't stand up against my appetite for sex, you stupid fool! That's why I don't date them, why I don't sleep with them and why you don't want to be one! I *break* women!"

Even pinned as he was, chip used his legs to kick Damon squarely in the ribs, ending him back and flipping him over onto the floor. With the the strength that came from his masculine past, Chip quickly pounced on top of Damon, and pinned his arm behind him in a classic wresting move.

"Good. I like it rough, too."

"You're not even real, Chip!" Damon said, his face being pushed into the rug. "I'm not doing anything. You have nothing I want."

Chip released his grip on Damon, allowing the man to turn over. Chip stood over him, straddling him. "You really do think I'm a man, don't you?" He said. "Well, I hate to disappoint you."

The young man, intern and traveling companion lifted one of his smooth, slender legs and fed his panties over them, and let them slide down his other leg.

"What... What... What the fuck is that?" Damon asked, looking horrified.

Only now did Damon finally understand the extent of what Dr. Tinsley had done to the poor kid.

"You've never seen a cunt before?" Chip replied. Slowly, Chip crouched down onto Damon, lowering himself onto him. "You have a lot to learn." Chip then stood up again, but was lifting Damon by the belt. His whole body was being suspended in the air. "Lessons begin now."

As he was being lifted, and seeing the muscles in Chip's arms, Damon's eyes lit up. "You really want to test me?"

"Yes I do," Chip said, trowing him on the bed.

Damon gripped Chip by the face and rammed him into the bed, and lifted hid legs into the air. "I think I know a little bit more about cunts than you do, fucker."

The older man's cock was harder than it had been in years, and ramming his captive partner over and over was easy. Damon's ravenous sexual cravings were now unleashed.

Every inch of that guest room was used that night, every surface became a bed, and every object a toy. Sheets were stained, ripped and shredded.

When they were exhausted, drained and filled, they were driven to start all over again. They were both trying to prove something to each other, trying to make each other yield and surrender, which neither were willing to do.

There was no tenderness. No kissing. They took turns torturing each other. Damon grabbed Chet's breasts like he was going to rip them off, and bit his nipples as if they were edible.

Chip Shoved his mouth over Damon's fat cock, and used his teeth to make him growl with pain, then teasing with his tongue to get him to cum, which he resisted every step of the way.

He held Chip's face down, using his hair like a handle and forced his mouth up and down over his cock, again and again, like a tool.

When he finally had a mouthful of Damon's cum, he spat it back into Damons's mouth and held his jaw shut with his legs clenched around his head.

Chip removed his woolen knit leggings and tied them around Damon's neck, and tightened them trying to cut off his air supply. Damon did the same with his knee on the back of Chip's neck.

Chip smothered Damon's face with his newly ample buttocks and made him eat his way out from being suffocated.

Their sex, lasting hours and hours, was angry, hateful and dirty. Yet, they would not stop.



The next morning, as the room filled up with sunlight, Damon was woken by a combination of two things: the sound of people chatting in the distance and the repeated sound of the mail alert on his phone.

He was alone, with an empty, entirely spent bed, naked without anything left to cover him. He found his underwear draped over his head, and they were dry enough to put on.

Once he was sitting up, he found his phone under the bed, and checked what was happening.

"Not cool" was the subject of his first email. "Disgusting" was the second. "Never come back" said another. "NOTICE OF DISMISSAL" was the one that stood out.

He worked through the emails quickly. They were all the same. His employees were all sending him vicious messages of hate. "How could you?" one read from his faithful secretary.

It was five emails in when he finally saw that it was in reply to another email, quoted below.

"Damon and I are getting married, guys!" it read. "Be happy for us!"

Damon checked his other emails, and they also had similar quotes. Chip, it seemed was busy last night. He had seemingly messaged everyone in his work email chain, spreading word of the so-called engagement, with photos of Damon, the ring, and Chip's effusive declarations of everlasting love and how they had been in love for a very long time.

Finally, the message that read "NOTICE OF DISMISSAL" was the last he read, because he didn't need to read any more. He was fired. Fired from the business he owned. It was done. He'd lose everything, now.

They had everything they needed. Sex with a co-worker was a fireable offense. Marrying them was a fireable offense. Lying about it was a fireable offense. Lying to his partner about Chip's location was a fireable offense. They had him dead to rights.

"You're awake!" Chip said, opening the door. He was dressed in an ankle-length nightgown in red, with red snowflakes on it. He looked remarkably fresh and bright for someone who had been through a marathon of sex overnight. "Get dressed!"

Damon looked up from his phone. "I can never go back again," he said. "My life in Los Angeles is over."

"How wonderful!" Chip said with a smile. Chip, or if Damon was being honest with himself, Holly sat on his lap and kicked her slippered feet in the air. "We can start over!"

"You did this."

"Did I tell you that the house next to Paula's is going up for sale? We can get it and become real townies! Oh, I love you, Damon! We're going to be so happy here!"

A few minutes later, after being coaxed into a robe so he could come out of the room, he found the family gathered around the Christmas Tree. Mrs. Spencer, Trudy, Paula and Holly were all wearing the same matching christmassy nightgowns.

"Well, look who finally got up," Mrs. Spencer said.

"Now that the big loser is here," Paula asked, "can we open our presents now, Mom?"

"Yes, girls. You can open them."

Damon could barely stand in his condition, so he slouched into a chair and let himself go limp. His life, as far as he was concerned, was now over.

"I already got what I wanted," Holly said as she got on Damon's lap again and snuggled up.

"Here's a gift for you, Damon," Ward said, bending over to pick up a small box wrapped in white paper. He handed it to Damon, but Holly took it instead, as Damon wasn't moving, too stunned to do much else but blankly stare in the nothingness.

"It's from Chip!" Holly said, reading the tag on it. "How thoughtful. Now, don't tear the paper, I want to save that."

Robotically, Damon removed the ribbon, undid the wrapping paper and opened the box. A note was inside, attached to jar. "I won't need this anymore," it read.

"What is it?" Holly asked.

Damon quickly put the lid back on the box. He didn't say another word, he just kept his hands on the box and kept it pressed shut, not allowing anyone to touch it. He did so for the next hour as his family opened their gifts.

Mrs. Spencer spent most of the morning looking over at her son and his soon-to-be wife. She was just the woman he needed, she thought to herself. Just the kind of woman who could keep him in check and make him finally embrace the life Mrs. Spencer always knew he was destined to live.

Paula and Trudy 'oohed' and 'awwed' at their gifts — Ward mooned over his new caboose set, Mrs. Spencer loved her sewing supplies, and Holly was enthralled with the cookware she got.

For almost all of the Spencer family, it was the merriest Christmas ever.



"Hey-hey, knock knock," Trudy said as she and Paula entered the Spencer home without waiting to be let in.

They stopped in the living room, looking down at their brother, seated in an easy chair. "Oh my God, you get even more pathetic every day," Paula said.

"Have you ever sat down to dinner and just said, I don't know, like, maybe I should *stop* eating?"

Damon looked down at his stomach, which bulged out dramatically. In the three years he had been a resident of Chestnut Cove, and in the three years his wife Holly had been cooking for him, he had let her delicious food have its way with him. When he stepped on the scales these days, they screamed in agony before telling him he was 260 pounds.

"Hey guys!" Holly said, coming from the bedroom, still feeding an earring in. She was all dressed up. "You ready to shop this town into submission?" She said.

"Credit cards ready to be abused!" Trudy said with a smile.

All three were dressed much the same way. After all, they spent so much time together. Every day they were over at each other's houses, chatting, talking, laughing, talking, chatting, gossiping, talking and chatting. With every passing day, it seemed like they were almost blending into the same person. In fact, it wasn't rare for Damon to note all three of them wearing the same outfits, trading them back and forth over time. It was like he was married to one of his sisters in a lot of ways.

Holly was dressed up the sexiest of all the girls, as she seemed motivated to always be the best looking of the bunch, and spent the most time on her appearance. She was wearing a red check miniskirt, tall brown high-heeled boots with white knit socks, a cropped knit sweater and had done her hair in a giant braid with a Christmas ribbon. After all, in Chestnut Cove, it was always Christmas. Even in June.

She sat on the armrest of Damon's chair. "Is my big pooh bear going to be okay without me?" She asked.

"I'll be fine. I just need to rest on my day off."

His mother, Ward and the Spencer sisters had all splurged and bought the Cooper's gift shop, the one they had been trying to get Damon the powerful executive to buy, but now that he was Damon the fat, defeated husband, they all decided to buy it themselves and they paid Damon to run it for them.

Six days a week, from eleven to nine, Damon could be found behind the counter, selling cheap trash with holiday themes to the tourists. He was awash in tacky Christmas decor all day long. Every day. Every week. Every month. Every year.

He had to. Somehow he had to pay the mortgage and for his wife's shopping bills.

Holly patted her husband's stomach. "Okay, sweetie. Text me if you need anything."

Holly joined her sisters-in-law and they left together, whispering and giggling.

Damon waited to hear the car pull away. He got up, fighting gravity with everything he had, and finally stood on his own two feet. He left his house,



headed across the street and arrived at his mother's home. There, he went in through the basement door he used to use to sneak in, and instead found Ward, with a denim engineer's cap on. He was polishing a model train engine with a cloth.

"There's my man," Ward said with a smile. "Take a look! It's the Clinchfield Legacy!" He held it up higher. "With coal tender!"

Dead-eyed and listless, Damon walked up to Ward. "She's a beaut," he said.

"Here," Ward said, putting an engineer's cap on top of Damon's head. "Let's get the day started at the rail yard!"

Ward shuffled around his step-son's rotund belly, almost larger than his own, and put the new engine on the tracks.

"You have the honor," Ward said.

"Thanks, Dad." Damon pushed the lever to get the trains rolling. They all fired to life.

The engines revved up and made their gentle clickety-clacking noises, speeding around on their tiny wheels.

"Here comes the Christmas express!" Ward said, excitedly as a gold-trimmed engine came out of a tunnel. "Ah, look at her go! It doesn't get any better than this!" Ward said as he watched his models run around the tracks, in an endless loop.

It had been three years of this. Three years of working in the gift shop for a measly salary, running trains, suffering the insults of his sisters, having angry sex, and taking orders from a woman who used to work for him as a man.

"No, it doesn't," Damon said, dipping his head and feeling his soul leave his body. "It really doesn't. It's like Christmas every day."

The End

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Sick Puppy Comics

Making Friends

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. Three college students sign up for a six-month isolation experiment. Things start to get a a little strange, and they begin to lose their masculinity day by day. Yet, they don't seem to even notice... Full Color Comic Book / 38 pages

The Pet Sitter

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. Asked to look after a supermodel's pet for a while, James finds himself thrust out of his own apartment and into hers. Day by day, it seems like circumstances adapt James to become the resident of a supermodel's lifestyle. Full Color Comic Book / 29 pages

A Curious Curse

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. When teen goth Brandyn gets his drivers' license, he thinks it's a ticket to adulthood. Unfortunately, he's already cashed a ticket in the opposite direction. Full Color Comic Book / 27 pages

Boys Will Be Girls

Story & Art by Fraylim, Script by KK, Ink & Color by Joe Six-Pack. The "Summer Blossom" camp welcomes anew group of young men. But although it may be an all-boys camp when they arrive, it's girls-only when they leave. Full Color Comic Book / 100 pages

The Step-Witch

Story by Joe Six-Pack. Dillon has a new stepmother. Problem is that she and Dillon don't get along. More of a problem for Dillon is that she's a witch — and wants a daughter. Full Color Comic Book / 17 pages

Double-Crossed

Story & Art by Joe-Six Pack. Jesse is on the run from justice. When he finds an old friend who can help him, that old friend seems more interested in helping Jesse become a woman. Comic / 24 pages

The Charm

Story by Joe-Six Pack, art by Osoku WARUI. Gavin is a student who laments his boring life. Then he crosses paths with Krista. Things are about to change, and not necessarily for the better. Comic / 24 pages

College Can Change a Man

Story & art by Joe-Six Pack. A small college has been hanging on to it's male-dominated mindset for too long. Now, a new member of the board has arrived to make some changes. A lot of changes. Comic / 243 pages

Candlewick Court Series

Welcome to Candlewick

By Joe Six-Pack. Book 1 in a series. Candlewick Court is looking for new residents. Residents who will find new lives and new genders in a suburban paradise with a mysterious purpose. Book / 149 pages / 30 illustrations

Surrender to Candlewick

By Joe Six-Pack. Book 2 in a series. Candlewick Court has found it's first homeowners, and the kids need a school to attend. What kind of bizarre transformations await them? Book / 152 pages / 38 illustrations

Brides of Candlewick

By Joe Six-Pack. Book 3 in a series. The story of Colin and Elliot concludes as we welcome Candlewick Court's next homeowners. Book / 159 pages / 39 illustrations

Teens Transformed

She Made Me Into My Sister

"A Little Too Clever" by Joe Six-Pack. Wyatt wanted to help his girlfriend get revenge, but at what cost? As it turns out, a cost greater than any boy could have imagined. Book / 88 pages / 20 illustrations

Gone Girly for Good

"Big in Japan" by James J Craft. Mike and Ken were one-hit-wonder rock stars. Then they discovered they had fans in Japan, so they left to become famous. Then they discovered that the Japanese didn't know they were guys. Book / 77 pages / 26 illustrations

One Year in Tokyo

By James J Craft, illustrations by Kwon Lee Tran. Mickey is forced to spend a year with his father in Japan. However things often get confused when words get translated from English to Japanese, as Mickey soon finds out... Book / 87 pages / 20 illustrations

Student Exchange

By Joe Six-Pack. Kelley Sue's convinced a French exchange student to disguise himself as a girl. What happens when she realizes he has no intention of returning back home? Book / 77 pages / 22 illustrations

He's a Valley Girl, Fer Sure

From the files of TGStories.com: "Corey Taylor's Big Bodacious Adventure" by Joe Six-Pack. For Corey, the only way he can get into college is to pretend to be a girl. But when does it stop being pretend? When he's cheerleader? A girlfriend? A beauty queen? Book / 78 pages / 17 illustrations

From Boys to Bridesmaids

"Always a Bridesmaid, Never a Groom" by James J Craft. Two spoiled and privileged boys are about to be put in their place by their new step-mother. And their place is by her side as her bridesmaids and daughters. Book / 77 Pages / 16 illustrations

Little Mis-ter Popular

"My Two Moms" by James J Craft, illustrations by rocketxpert. Thanks to his aunt's "Confidence Club," Leon will find a way to become popular, and to get over all his hang-ups... Including his masculinity. Book / 77 Pages / 17 illustrations

Bride to Be

By Joe Six-Pack. Derek and Cole grew up together as kids. One year, though, Cole has to start pitching in at the family wedding business. His life will never be the same. Book / 63 pages / 25 illustrations

Winning is Everything

"Costume drama" by Joe Six-Pack. Seth made a funny little bet for Halloween. He needed to pull off the impersonation of a Cheerleader for a party. What's at stake? 100 million dollars and his manhood. Book / 215 pages / 37 illustrations

Creating Samantha

Story by Cheryl Lynn, illustrations by The Might Fenek. Samuel was under the tutelage of his legal guardian, only his guardian had no intentions of letting him grow up male. Book / 70 pages / 16 illustrations

Convicts to Co-Eds

Story by By Courtney Captisa & Claire Bear, illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Three teen boys are sent to a reform school. What they can't know is that they are about to be "reformed" all the way into skirts... And beyond. Book / 154 pages / 31 illustrations

Mall Makeover Madness

"A Day at the Mall" by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Four boys are going to have one weird day at the mall. By the time the day is over, it's four girls who leave the mall to begin their new lives. Book / 109 pages / 25 illustrations

Crosley High Chronicles

By Joe Six-Pack. River is coming to a new school, and trying to fit in. The problem is the only way he's going to fit in is in skirts and heels. Book / 217 pages / 75 illustrations

The Substitute Ski Bunny

By Joe Six-Pack. Walker is a young man who's fallen in love with a girl. The only way he can get close to her is to dress up and become her roommate. It's not going to go according to plan, though. Book / 132 pages / 31 illustrations

Tales of Transformation

He's the Wrong Girl

"Office Chemistry" by Joe Six-Pack. James had to fill in at the reception desk. Problem is, the business is a bio-genetics company. And all of the sudden the coffee tastes funny. Book / 53 pages / 14 illustrations

City Boy, Country Girl

By Joe Six-Pack. Richard's successful city life is interrupted when a sheep he wants to fleece needs urgent care out in the country. But instead of returning home, all Richard's wife hears are a series of suspicious excuses. Revised in 2019. Book / 92 pages / 34 illustrations

Thames Greene

By James J Craft. Ira wanted something better for his family. A new start. But in Thames Greene, everyone's getting a new start, whether they want it or not. Book / 77 pages / 26 illustrations

Hiding in High Heels

"How Not to be a Sissy" By Joe Six-Pack. Vince was on the run from people who wanted their millions back. Howard was a friend with a funny little idea and a knack for making subliminal CDs. Mini-Pix / 48 pages / 15 illustrations

A Blessing in Disguise

By KK, illustrations by Kannel. Jay was a witness to a murder, and now he's the target of a vicious criminal. Resorting to a female disguise, he becomes trapped with no way out. Book / 84 pages / 16 illustrations

I'm Your Dolly

"Barbie-in-a-Box" By Joe Six-Pack. Tyler wasn't much of a boyfriend anymore. Jessica wanted to throw him out, but then a better idea came to her, in the form of the Barbie-in-a-Box service. Tyler better get used to pink. Book / 103 pages / 20 illustrations

His Life as a Trophy Wife

By Joe Six-Pack. Nick had a great life, but then it evaporated. Now he's down on his luck. In steps a wealthy executive wiling to pay him handsomely to pretend to be his wife. What can it hurt? Revised in 2018. Book / 256 pages / 39 illustrations

Male Monday, Girl Friday

"Hey, Cutie!" by James J Craft. Daniel is going to be promoted from his average life to an exciting executive position. At least, that's what his bosses are telling him. They may not be telling him everything. Book / 58 pages / 20 illustrations

The Happiest Place on Earth

From the files of TGStories.com: "The Fairest One of All" By Joe Six-Pack. Will is a kid looking for a job. He gets one, performing as Snow White at a theme park. For Will, he doesn't suspect that playing the role and wearing the costume is slowly changing him, day by day. Book / 51 pages / 21 illustrations

Hello, Nurse

From the files of TGStories.com: "Quality Health Care". Dane is filling in as a nurse for his pal Jimmy at his new office. Although both are doctors, Dane begins to take to his new role as a nurse. Soon, he feels compelled to be the ideal nurse. Book / 44 pages / 15 illustrations

My Boss, The Bimbo

"If I Were a Betting (Wo)Man" By James J Craft, illustrations by blackshirtboy. CEO Lucas has a superiority complex. When his long-suffering secretary is able to feed into Lucas' competitive nature, he'll make any bet to prove his dominance over women. Book / 38 pages / 10 illustrations

He's the Girl They Want

"Rallies'" by Joe Six-Pack. Spencer has a great new executive job in the food service industry, but first he's got to learn the ropes of the business by waiting on tables. He just doesn't quite fit in with the cheerleader theme. Yet. Book / 63 pages / 22 illustrations

Demoted and Degraded

"Trixie the Secretary" by Angela J. Cindy didn't much like Tom Jones attitude and his advances, so when she has the opportunity to help take the wind out of his sails, she takes it. But she had no idea that it was all designed to make Tom into Trixie the secretary. Book / 87 pages / 17 illustrations

I, Candy

"Sissy Sweets" by James J Craft, illustrations by rocketxpert. Inheriting his family's bakery requires this young man to become the new face of the business. A female face. Book / 45 pages / 15 illustrations

Boyz II Girlz

"The Making of the Ballroom Brats" by Joe Six-Pack. The Ballroom Brats become the newest worldwide celebrity sensation. How did four unsuspecting guys at a fast food joint become the hottest girl group in music? Book / 113 pages / 34 illustrations

His Strangest Desire

"Employee of the Month" by Joe Six-Pack. Mick is declared Employee of the Month, and he's going to find himself hurtling headlong into facing his weirdest inner desire. Book / 59 pages / 19 illustrations

Hard Time or High Heels

"I'm Turning into My Mother" by James J Craft, illustrations by rocketxpert. Colby got deep into debt to a local gangster. Before long, he's on the arm of that very same gangster as his reluctant girlfriend. Book / 75 pages / 20 illustrations

Seriously Skirted

"The Show Piece" by KK. Illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Mel finds work at a clinic as a secretary. He slowly begins to fit to role. Book / 75 pages / 19 illustrations

From Mister to Sister

Story by Melissa N., illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Dan just wanted to help guide his girlfriend's sister out of her depression. Instead, he's being guided out of his manhood. Book / 84 pages / 24 illustrations

The Russian Girl

Story by Melissa N., illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Casey's wife has had enough of watching him kill himself with work, so she forces him out of his comfort zone... Into the life of a female stripper. Book / 196 pages / 30 illustrations

Swindled into Skirts

"Beta Male" by Joe Six-Pack. Kyle inherited a multi-million dollar mansion in southern California. He begins to adjust to the Cali lifestyle, but his adjustments seems to have a decidedly feminine flavor to them. Book / 78 pages / 23 illustration

Mergers & Acquisitions

Story by James J. Craft, Illustrations by Sortimid. Mark is a disaffected retail salesperson, and after a takeover of his store, he finds himself selling feminine fashion... and struggling to embrace everything about it. Book / 103 pages / 31 illustration

Suddenly a Secretary

Story & art by Joe Six-Pack. Rock guitarist Mick has become obsessed with following the life of secretary Lori Chandler through her inter-office email messages. Soon, Mick is taking her place. Book / 133 pages / 30 illustrations

Stories of the Supernatural

A Change for the Better

"Do-Overs" by Joe Six-Pack. Evan wants a chance to do over his biggest mistake. He gets the chance, but he keeps wanting his new life to be a little bit better than the last. Book / 59 pages / 18 color illustrations

Changed and Rearranged

"Wrongs Make Wright" By Joe Six-Pack. Chris and Matt were rivals. Then, Matt decided to show everyone how smart he truly was by impersonating a teacher. But the disguise becomes more and more real, much to Chris' dismay. Book / 74 pages / 19 illustrations

From Pals to Gals

From the files of TGStories.com: "Mandate of the People" By Joe Six-Pack. Teens Jeremy and Stewart are good friends, but a bit thick in the noggin. When they jokingly nominate each other for Prom Queen, they slowly become the perfect candidates, thanks to some magic. Book / 45 pages / 16 illustrations

A High-Heeled Halloween

Story & art by Joe Six-Pack. A costume shop has four spooky tales to tell this Halloween, where the price you pay for your costume is far more than money. Book / 128 pages / 34 illustrations

Crossed Fiction

If the Shoes Fit

"Hand Me Downs" By KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Sydney is a teen who is just trying to make it through the summer with no money. He finds himself wearing hand-me-downs from his sister, and that takes his life in a whole new direction. Book / 98 pages / 30 illustrations

Sisters for the Summer

"Camp Counseling" By Joe Six-Pack. Brock McCade always thought of himself as a real man, or at least he would be one, someday. After summer camp, he's no longer so sure. Book / 76 pages / 17 illustrations

They're the Girls for the Job

"Peace and Harmony" By James J Craft. Illustrations by blackshirtboy. Pete and Harmon need jobs bad. How far would they have to go to get them? Book / 64 pages / 19 illustrations

Blondie's Lost Summer

By KK. Illustrations by Fraylim. Carl's dream summer was about to become three months of dresses, heels and makeup. Book / 159 pages / 48 illustrations

Blondie's Lost Year

By KK. Illustrations by Fraylim. Book Two in the Blondie Series. Carl's trip to Florida has been horrible enough, trapped in dresses and makeup. Now, high school has presented a whole new level of humiliation for him. Book / 221 pages / 52 illustrations

Blondie He's Not

Story by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Mark got a job at a salon, and fell in love with one of the customers. Problem was that customer was Candi "Blondie" Wethers, and what happened to Candi was about to happen to Mark. Book / 151 pages / 40 illustrations

I Never Wanted to be a Woman

"Politically Corrected" By Cheryl Lynn. Illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Michael's politically active mother has decided she's going to make her hippie son over into the daughter she always wanted. Book / 64 pages / 19 illustrations

The Boy's Guide to Girlhood

Story by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Dweeb Kenny and cool Rex find themselves trapped in a Principal's twisted scheme, and only one of them is going to get out in tact. Book / 109 pages / 32 illustrations

Fashion Victims

Story by Lauren Bliss, illustrations by Fraylim. Teenage boy Jamie just needed clothes for school. Oh, he's going to get clothes for school. Just not male ones. Will he ever need male clothes again? Book / 67 pages / 26 illustrations

The Making of a Beach Bunny

Story by KK & Fraylim, illustrations by Fraylim. Before heading off to college, John wanted to spend his last normal summer at the old rental summer house with his friend Stanley. There was nothing about this summer that would be normal. Book / 134 pages / 58 illustrations

Medical Miss-Practice

Story by KK & Fraylim, illustrations by Fraylim. Jerry just needed a medical procedure. He came out with two big new problems and a whole new life. Now he's losing everything he loves, piece by piece. Book / 95 pages / 51 black & white illustrations

12 Days of Christmas

Story by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Paul was a rising executive, but he had a secret embezzlement scheme. Now he's being blackmailed into skirts day-by-day in the 12 days of Christmas. Book / 74 pages / 21 illustrations

Seriously Sissified

A Family Femmed

"The Femmed Family Robinson" by James J. Craft & Cheryl Lynn, illustrations by Sortimid. The Robinson boys all had dreams of their own, once. Now they have new ones, thanks to their stepmother. Book /96 pages / 29 color illustrations

Forever Femmed

Story by James J. Craft & Cheryl Lynn, illustrations by Sortimid. "A Family Femmed's" Deborah is still hard at work, flipping men into sissies and selling them to the highest bidder. But this time, there's a new wrinkle. Book / 108 pages / 28 illustrations

Auntie's Girl Time

By Cheryl Lynn. David was just a young teenage boy who wanted all the things in life a man could look forward to. His aunt, though, is going to make sure he never gets them. Book / 79 pages / 20 illustrations

Revenge of the Cheerleaders

"Pansy Cheers" By Angela J. Patrick Sears was a football player trying to sleep with every cheerleader at his small college. He'd have to pay for his conquests. Book / 116 pages / 19 illustrations

He's Got His Mind Made Up

By James J. Craft. Illustrations by kinkyrocket. Corey has just a sliver of a chance to get into college, but that chance involves becoming his stepmother's maid. And she wants him to fit both the role and the dress. Book / 68 pages / 16 illustrations

Fated for Femininity

Story by KK, illustrations by RocketXpert. When a web page shows Evan having sex with another boy, the poor kid is chased out of town — right into the arms of a gender therapist who has her own agenda. Book / 70 pages / 15 illustrations

Web Classics Revisited

Two Forms of ID

By Joe Six-Pack. Harvey had the unusual ability to convincingly imitate a teenage girl. In desperation, he has to use that talent to make some money. But when is enough enough? Paperback / 194 pages / text only

Barbie's Life

Story & Art by Melissa N. Chris was a student actor who said he could play any role. A disgruntled girlfriend and playwright are about to see if he'll be able to play the lead role in… Barbie's Life. Book / 55 pages / 21 rendered images

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