

A Tangled Web

by CBlack



A Tangled Web

Chapter One

by CBlack

Another day in the data analysis bullpen at DM Industries...


JC 2008


SIGH!


MUST BE NICE!
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME, BOB?

IT MUST BE *NICE* TO BE SO YOUNG AND GOOD-LOOKING THAT WOMEN LIKE STACY FALL OVER THEMSELVES TO GET YOUR ATTENTION!

YOU'RE ENVIOUS OF *SIMON? REALLY?*


HE'S LITTLE MORE THAN A WALKING, TALKING AD FOR HAIR PRODUCT!
AND AS FOR STACY, SHE'S A SWEET GIRL, BUT HER TASTE IN MEN IS NOTORIOUSLY DUBIOUS, AT BEST!

WHO CARES? IF I HAD A WOMAN LIKE THAT LOOK AT *ME* THE WAY SHE LOOKS AT SIMON, I'D BE IN HEAVEN!

YOU ALREADY *DO* HAVE A WOMAN LOOK AT YOU LIKE THAT... AND MORE! REMEMBER *CELIA*... YOUR *WIFE?* SHE *ADORES* YOU, MAN! WHY WOULD YOU EVEN *THINK* OF SCREWING WITH THAT?

I KNOW I SOUND LIKE A JERK, LOGAN, AND I KNOW SHE LOVES ME.. AND I LOVE HER! BUT... WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR OVER **30 YEARS** AND WHATEVER EXCITEMENT WE HAD RAN OUT YEARS AGO!

AND FACE IT... CELIA LOOKS **NOTHING** LIKE STACY! NEVER HAS AND **NEVER WILL!** IT'S SOMETHING THAT I'VE HAD TO ACCEPT AND I GUESS IT JUST STICKS IN MY **CRAW** A BIT!

WELL FAR BE IT FOR ME TO LECTURE YOU, BUT I REALLY HOPE YOU GET OVER THIS SUPERFICIAL ***FIXATION*** OF YOURS! IF NOT FOR YOUR MARRIAGE, THEN AT ***LEAST*** FOR CELIA! SHE DESERVES ***BETTER*** THAN THAT!

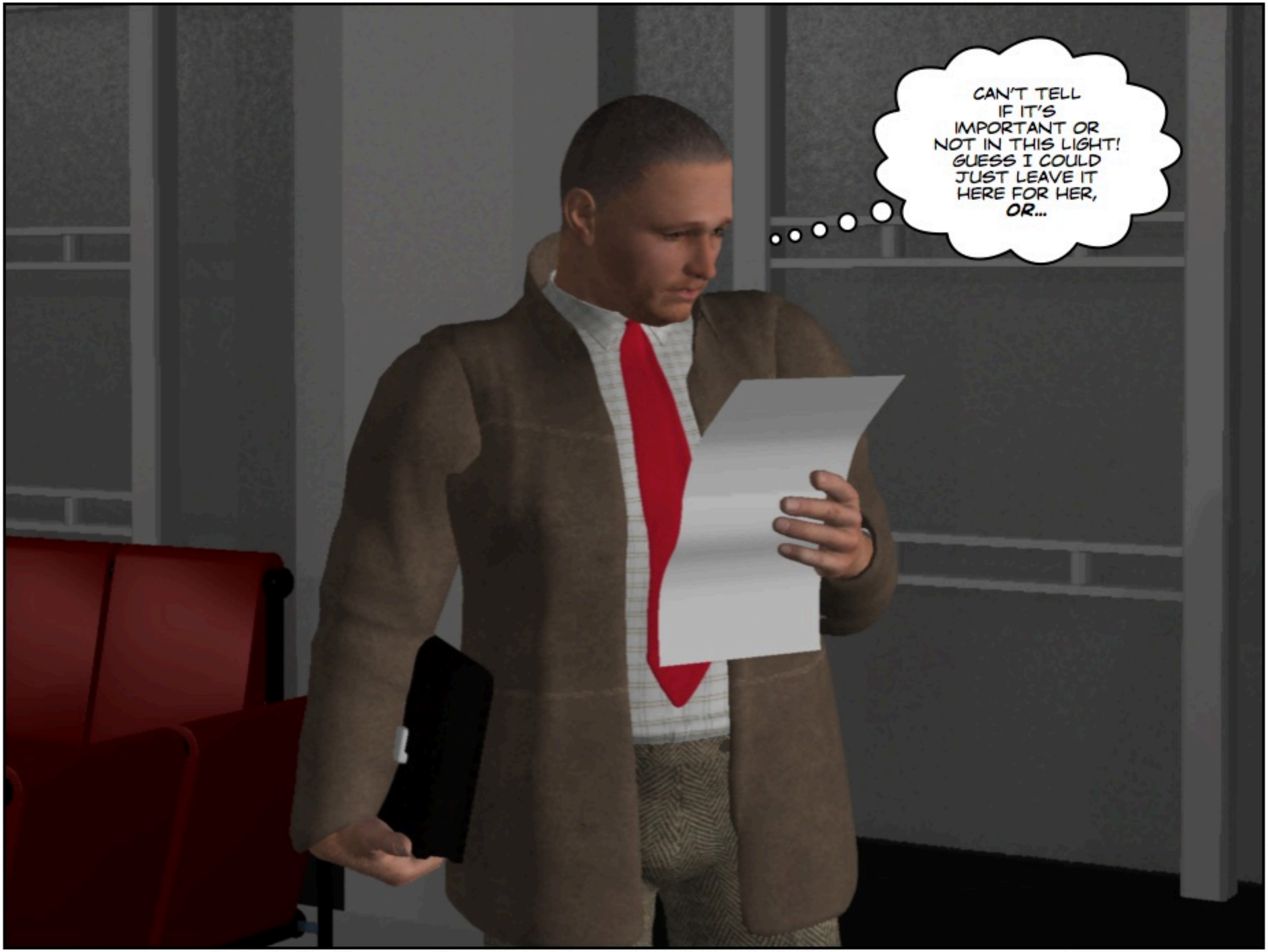
YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT! SHE DOES!


BUT SO DO I!

Several hours later, after everyone else has left...

SIGH! MIGHT AS WELL GET OUT OF HERE! I CAN FINISH THE REST OF THIS FROM HOME!


HMMPH! LOOKS LIKE STACY DROPPED SOMETHING EARLIER!


CAN'T TELL IF IT'S IMPORTANT OR NOT IN THIS LIGHT! GUESS I COULD JUST LEAVE IT HERE FOR HER, OR...

I COULD TAKE IT HOME AND RETURN IT TO HER ***PERSONALLY*** TOMORROW! DEFINITELY A ***MUCH*** BETTER IDEA!



A short time later, at the apartment of Bob and Celia Varney...

THAT SOUNDS LIKE BOB NOW...SEVERAL HOURS LATE AS USUAL! *SIGH!*

SOMETIMES I WONDER IF THAT JOB OF HIS IS ***REALLY*** WORTH IT!

I'M HOME!

WELCOME HOME, HONEY! HOW WAS YOUR DAY?

THE USUAL DREARINESS AND MIND-NUMBING DATA-ANALYSIS I'VE COME TO EXPECT ALL THESE YEARS!

POOR THING! WELL, I THOUGHT WE'D JUST CURL UP ON THE SOFA THIS EVENING WITH A COUPLE OF GLASSES OF WINE AND SNUGGLE TO SOME OLD MOVIES! WHAT DO YOU THINK?

GEE, I WISH I COULD, CELIA, BUT I'VE STILL GOT A WHOLE BUNCH OF WORK TO TAKE CARE OF! I'M JUST GONNA GRAB A QUICK BITE AND GO INTO THE DEN UNTIL I'M DONE!

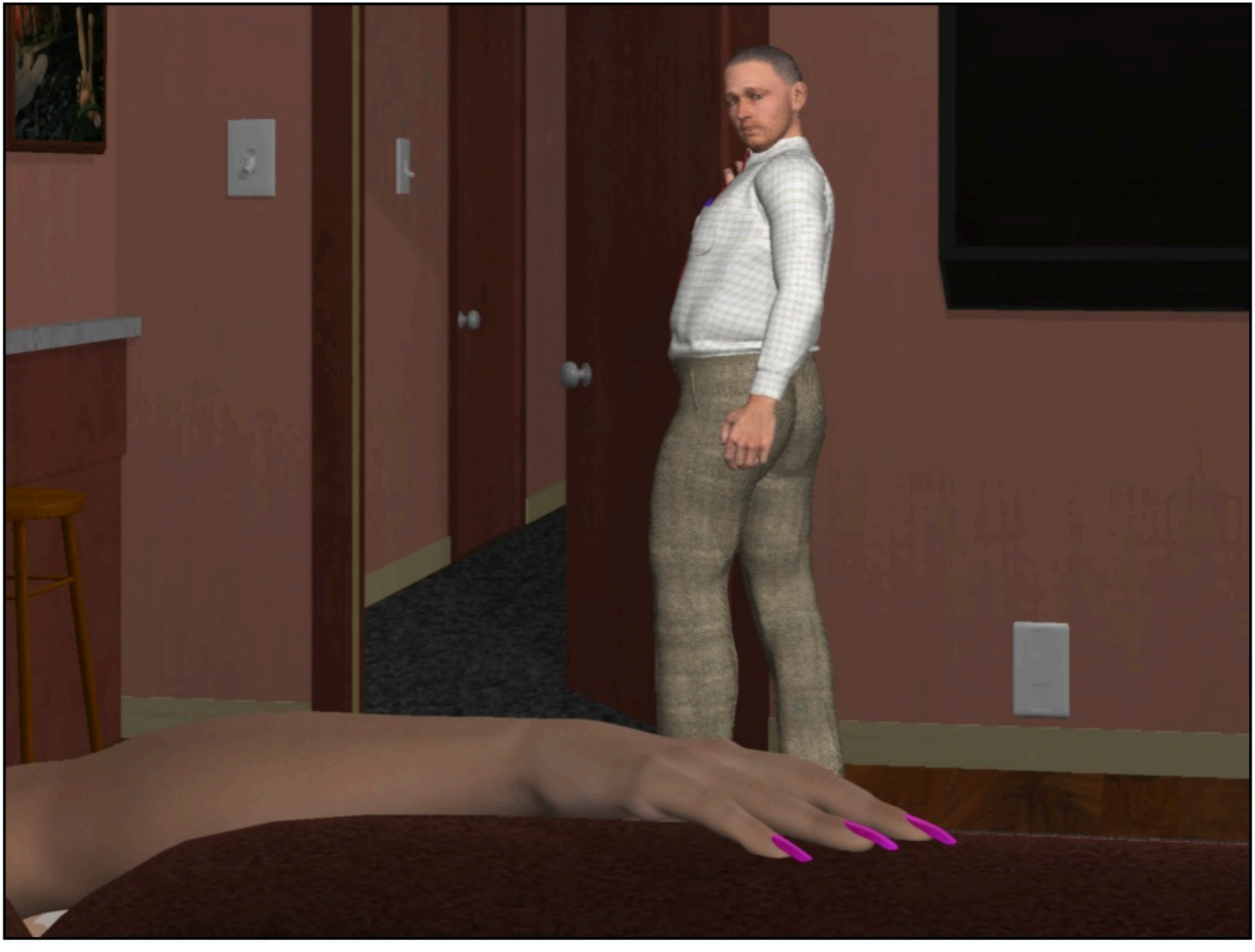
DON'T WAIT UP FOR ME!


WELL, ALL RIGHT! JUST DON'T STAY UP TOO LATE, HONEY!
YEAH... I WON'T!

A few minutes later, after grabbing a quick bite...

CELIA? ARE YOU STILL AWAKE?








WHEW! GET HOLD OF YOURSELF, VARNEY!


THAT KIND OF WISHFUL THINKING'S GONNA GET YOU IN TROUBLE!

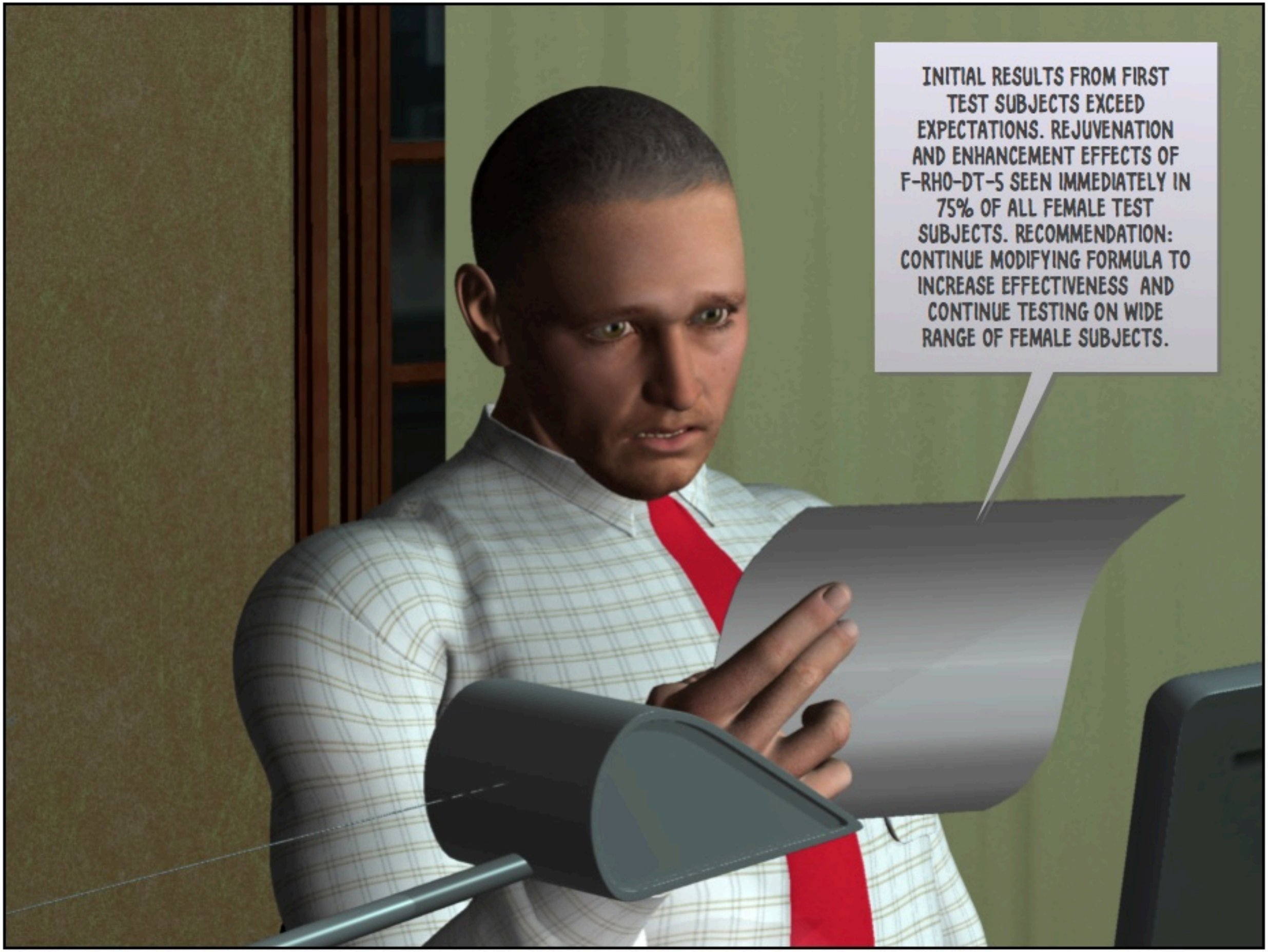
After retiring to his den...

SIGH!

zn~sunny

HMMM... LOOKS LIKE AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL ***MEMO!*** PROBABLY DESTINED FOR THE SHREDDER WHEN STACY DROPPED IT! THEY USUALLY KEEP THESE THINGS PRETTY ***TIGHT-FISTED!***

NOW WHAT THE HELL IS ***F-RHO-DT-5?***


INITIAL RESULTS FROM FIRST TEST SUBJECTS EXCEED EXPECTATIONS. REJUVENATION AND ENHANCEMENT EFFECTS OF F-RHO-DT-5 SEEN IMMEDIATELY IN 75% OF ALL FEMALE TEST SUBJECTS. RECOMMENDATION: CONTINUE MODIFYING FORMULA TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS AND CONTINUE TESTING ON WIDE RANGE OF FEMALE SUBJECTS.

REJUVENATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF FEMALE SUBJECTS?! SHIT! THIS HAS GOT TO BE SOME KIND OF JOKE!

THERE'S NO WAY THE COMPANY... OR ANYONE COULD'VE DEVELOPED SOMETHING THAT DOES WHAT THIS CLAIMS!

zn-sunny

BUT WHAT IF IT *IS* REAL? AND WHAT IF I COULD FIND A WAY TO MAKE *CELIA* ONE OF THEIR NEW *TEST SUBJECTS?*

THE VERY SAME WOMAN WHO LOVES ME, BUT IN A BODY THAT... THAT...!


WHEW! IT'S BEEN A HELL OF A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE HAD THOUGHTS LIKE THAT ABOUT CELIA! THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY I CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS F-RHO-DT PROJECT!
....

AND I THINK I *JUST* FIGURED OUT *HOW!*

The next morning, long before anyone else has arrived...

JUST AS I THOUGHT, ***NOTHING*** SHOWING UP ON THE COMPANY SERVER EVEN ***REMOTELY*** RELATED TO THE ***F-RHO-DT*** PROJECT... BUT THAT'S USING ***MY*** LOGIN! LET'S SEE IF ***THIS*** WORKS...!

HOLY SHIT! IT WORKED! I'M LOGGED IN AS CARL MELVILLE, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF R&D! CONSIDERING HOW MUCH HE GOES ON AND ON ABOUT HIS KIDS, IT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME THAT HIS PASSWORD IS A COMBINATION OF THEIR NAMES!

NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT CARL CAN SEE THAT I CAN'T...!

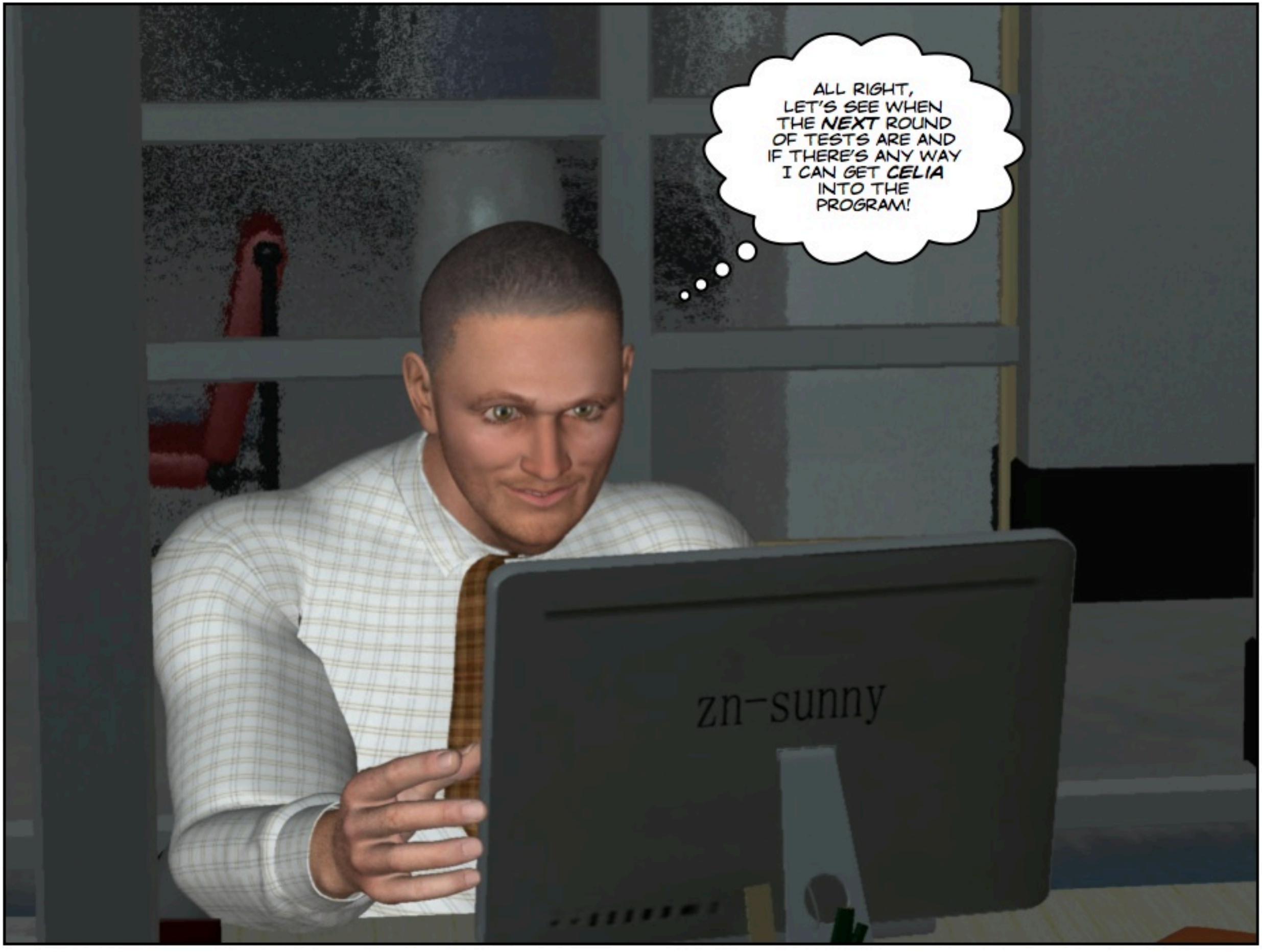
THERE IT IS! A WHOLE PARTITION FULL OF INFO ON THE F-RHO-DT PROJECT!

OH MY GOD! THERE ARE EVEN BEFORE AND AFTER PICTURES HERE! THIS STUFF IS FOR REAL!

Test subject 458090
Age: 72
Gender: F

Test subject 458090
Post treatment batch 5
F-RheDT

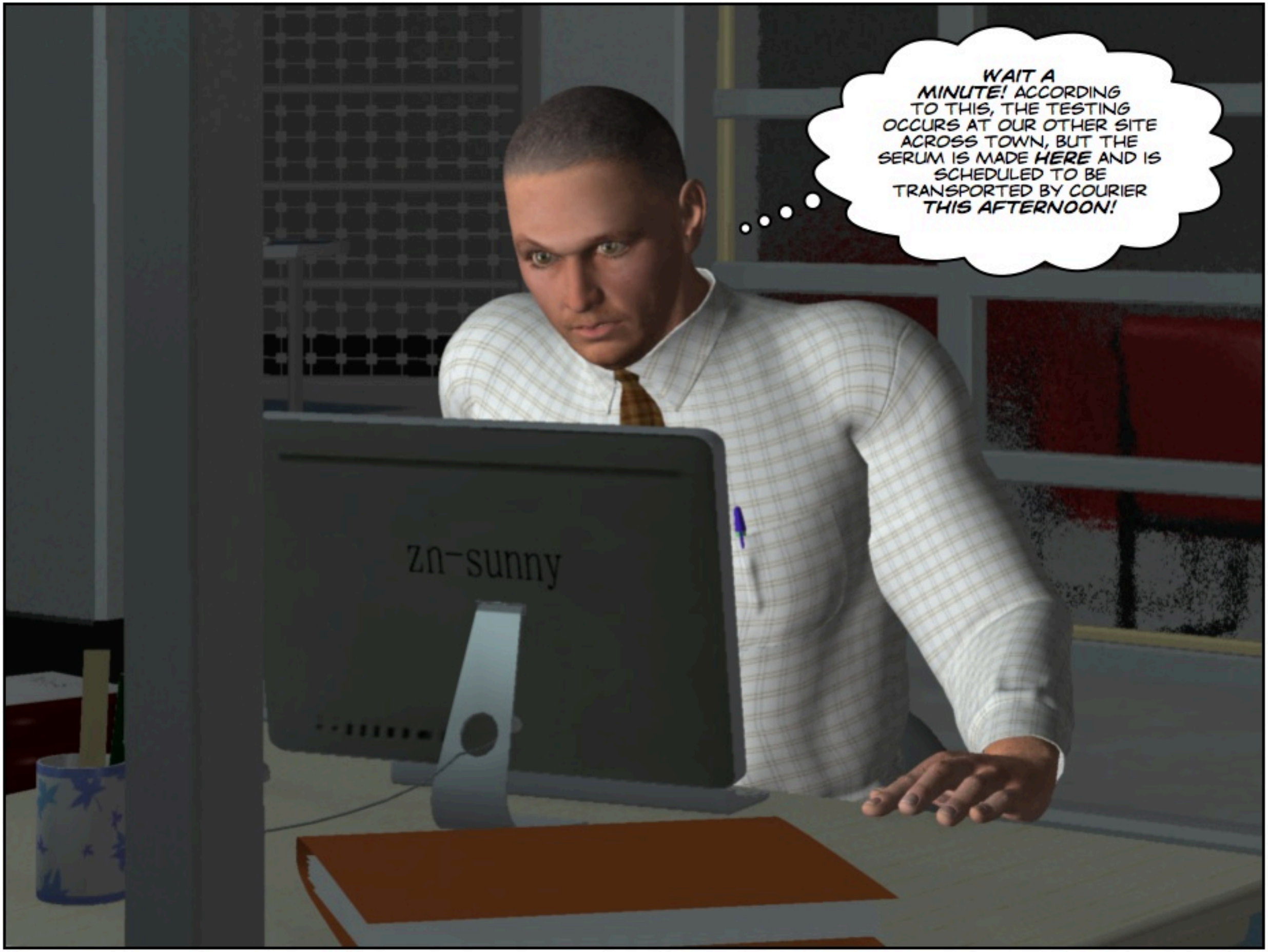
zn -sunny


ALL RIGHT, LET'S SEE WHEN THE NEXT ROUND OF TESTS ARE AND IF THERE'S ANY WAY I CAN GET CELIA INTO THE PROGRAM!
zn-sunny

CRAP! THE NEXT TESTS ARE TOMORROW... AND THEY'VE ALREADY SELECTED THE TEST SUBJECTS!

SHIT! SHIT! SHIT! I WAS SO DAMN CLOSE!

zn-sunny


WAIT A MINUTE! ACCORDING TO THIS, THE TESTING OCCURS AT OUR OTHER SITE ACROSS TOWN, BUT THE SERUM IS MADE HERE AND IS SCHEDULED TO BE TRANSPORTED BY COURIER THIS AFTERNOON!
zn-sunny

THEY'RE PICKING IT UP FROM RIGHT OVER *THERE* ON STACY'S DESK!

TWENTY-FIVE MEASLY FEET BETWEEN ME AND *EVERYTHING* I WANT!

Cart -- See to it that the shipment for testing at the Tukwila plant is ready for pickup at 4 PM tomorrow. The new subjects have been selected and testing will be on Monday. Use the usual courier and have the shipment to Stacy's desk prior to 4.

OKAY, *THINK* BOB! THERE'S *GOTTA* BE A WAY TO DO THIS!

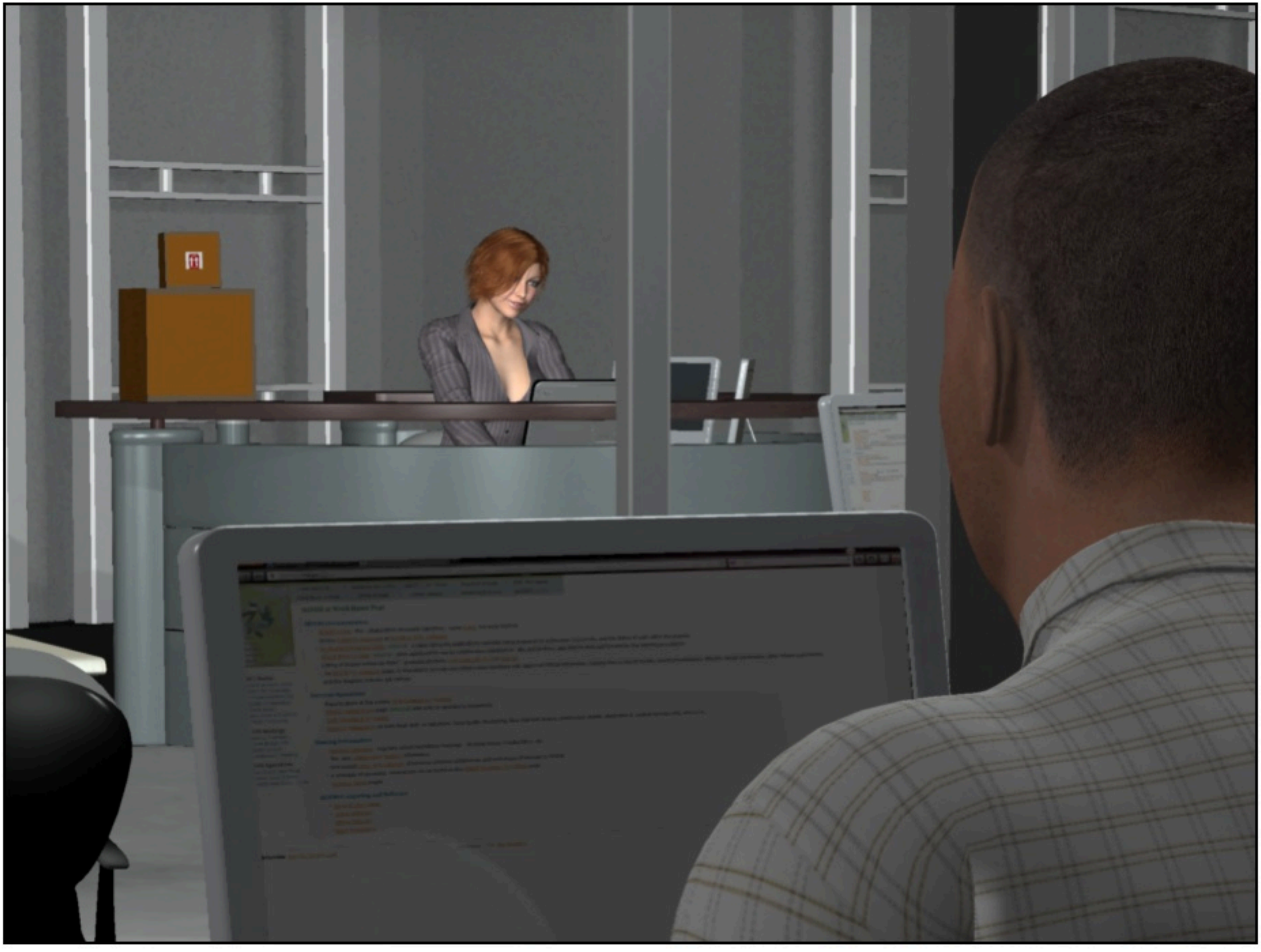
WELL, IF I CAN'T GET *CELIA* TO THE *SERUM*...!

zn-sunny


Later that afternoon...


HIYA, STACY. CAN YOU CALL THE COURIER AND HAVE THESE SHIPPED TO BILL EVANS AT THE WESTCHESTER OFFICE?
SURE THING!


MAKE SURE THEY HANDLE THEM WITH CARE! CARL WILL KILL ME IF THERE'S ANY BREAKAGE!
DON'T WORRY! WE'VE NEVER HAD A PROBLEM USING THEM! THEY'LL BE CAREFUL!











THANKS, JIMMY! BE ***CAREFUL*** WITH THAT BOX, OKAY? AND HAVE A NICE WEEKEND!

I ALWAYS AM, STACY. AND ***YOU*** HAVE A NICE ONE TOO!


AND
THANK YOU
"CARL"...

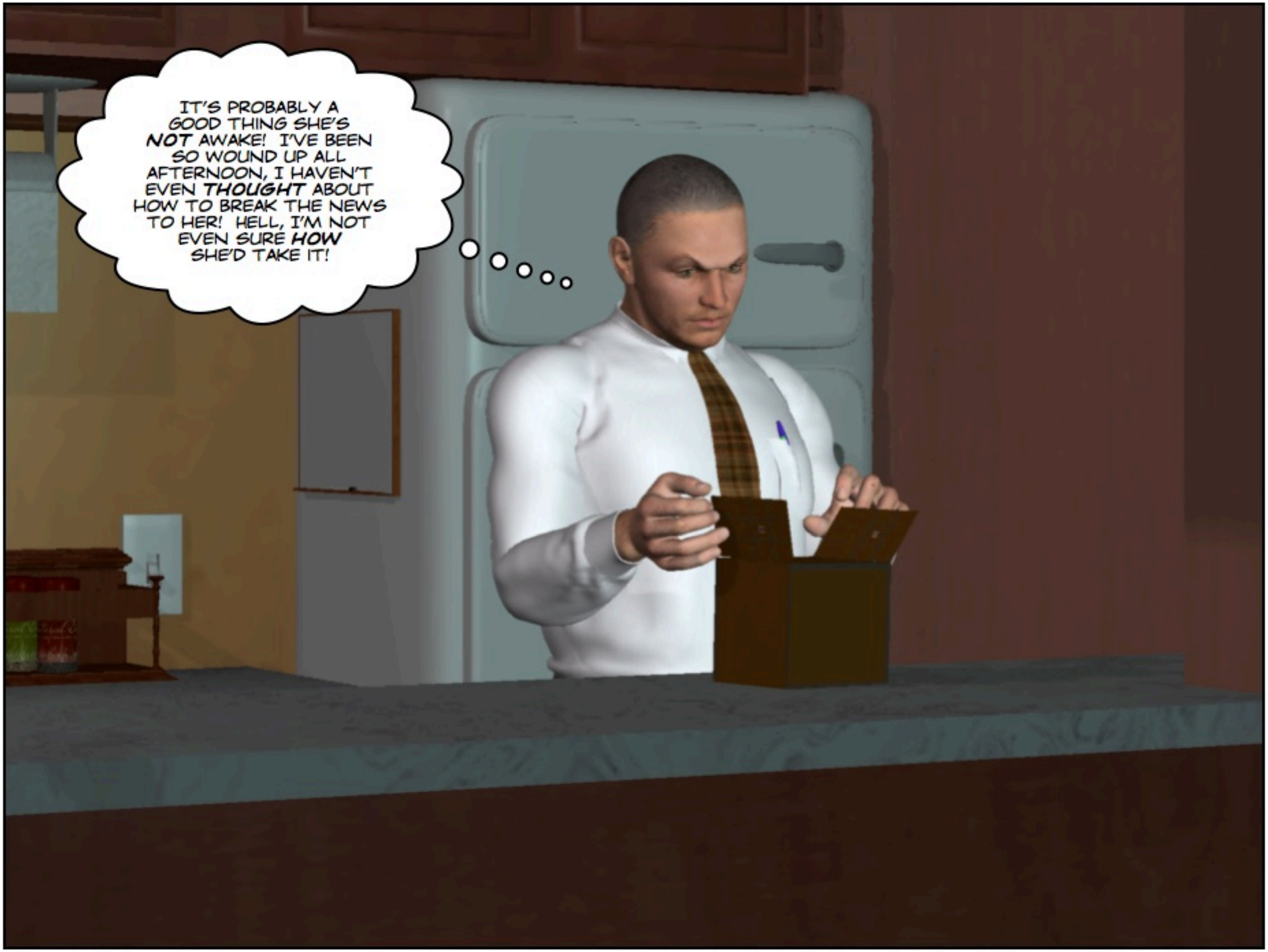
...FOR ORDERING THIS EXTRA LITTLE ***SOMETHING*** THAT NO ONE WILL ***EVER*** MISS!

That evening...

ANOTHER LONG DAY... BUT THIS TIME, *WORTH IT!*

CELIA? CELIA, HONEY... ARE YOU STILL AWAKE?


SOUND ASLEEP...


IT'S PROBABLY A GOOD THING SHE'S *NOT* AWAKE! I'VE BEEN SO WOUND UP ALL AFTERNOON, I HAVEN'T EVEN *THOUGHT* ABOUT HOW TO BREAK THE NEWS TO HER! HELL, I'M NOT EVEN SURE *HOW* SHE'D TAKE IT!

I CAN'T IMAGINE ***ANY*** WOMAN ***NOT*** BEING EXCITED ABOUT BECOMING ***YOUNG*** AND ***BEAUTIFUL!*** BUT WHAT IF SHE SEES THROUGH ME AND REALIZES THAT I'M ***NOT*** EXACTLY DOING THIS FOR ***SELFLESS*** REASONS?

OR EVEN **WORSE**... WHAT IF SHE'S ONE OF THE 25% THAT IT **WON'T** WORK ON? I DON'T THINK I COULD **HANDLE** THAT!

I'VE PUTTING SO **MUCH** AT RISK FOR THIS... MY JOB... MY **MARRIAGE**...!

BOB? IS THAT YOU?


BOB! I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU COME IN!
CELIA... YOU'RE AWAKE! IS... IS THAT A NEW NIGHTGOWN?

WHY, I'VE HAD THIS FOR ***YEARS!*** I JUST FELT LIKE WEARING IT TONIGHT... NO PARTICULAR REASON! WHY? DO YOU ***LIKE*** IT?

JEEZ! A WOMAN HER AGE SHOULD ***NOT*** BE WEARING THINGS LIKE ***THAT!***

UMMM, ***YEAH***... IT'S REAL ***NICE,*** HONEY!


WELL, SINCE WE'RE BOTH UP, HOW ABOUT I MAKE US A NICE CUP OF TEA AND WE CAN WATCH THE LATE SHOW TOGETHER!
NONSENSE! YOU'RE ALWAYS DOING THINGS FOR ME! LET ME FIX THE TEA!


YOU JUST RELAX HERE ON THE SOFA AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING!
WELL... OKAY! IF YOU SAY SO!

SO... IT COMES DOWN TO ***THIS!*** DO I COME CLEAN, TELL HER ***EVERYTHING,*** TAKE A HUGE CHANCE AND HOPE SHE'S ON BOARD...

OR...


JUST A LITTLE BIT SHOULDN'T BE TOO DRAMATIC OF A CHANGE... JUST ENOUGH SO I CAN TELL IF IT WORKS OR NOT!

AND IF IT **DOES**, IT'LL GIVE ME MORE TIME! AND IF CELIA IS **HAPPY** WITH THE RESULTS, I CAN CONVINCE HER TO TAKE **MORE!**

...


HERE YOU GO, HONEY!
WHY THANK YOU, LOVE! AND WHO OR WHAT DO I THANK FOR THIS SUDDEN, BUT VERY WELCOME, ATTENTIVENESS?


WELL, I JUST REALIZED THAT I'VE BEEN SPENDING SO MUCH TIME AWAY FROM YOU, AND WELL... YOU DESERVED BETTER!


I DESERVE NOTHING MORE THAN YOU, MY LOVE! DON'T YOU EVER FORGET THAT!


AND NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I THINK I NEED TO FRESHEN UP A BIT!


OOOH!


WH... WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, NOTHING I'M SURE! I PROBABLY JUST STOOD UP TOO FAST, THAT'S ALL!


ARE YOU SURE? ANYTHING ELSE FEEL... FUNNY?
JUST A LITTLE DIZZY... AND WARM....!
OH MY...!


HOLY SHIT! IT'S WORKING!


HOLY SHIT! IT'S WORKING!


HOLY SHIT! IT'S WORKING!


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HOLY SHIT! IT'S WORKING!


HOLY SHIT! IT'S WORKING!

ARE... ARE YOU **SURE** YOU'RE OKAY, HONEY? YOU LOOK A LITTLE... **FLUSH!**

I DON'T KNOW... I'M SO... **WARM!** MUST BE A **HOT FLASH!**

ARE... ARE YOU **SURE** YOU'RE OKAY, HONEY? YOU LOOK A LITTLE... ***FLUSH!***

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ARE... ARE YOU **SURE** YOU'RE OKAY, HONEY? YOU LOOK A LITTLE... **FLUSH!**

I DON'T KNOW... I'M SO... **WARM!** MUST BE A **HOT FLASH!**


WELL, WHATEVER THAT WAS, IT SEEMS TO HAVE PASSED, BUT IT'S ALSO LEFT ME FEELING A LITTLE... RECHARGED, SO TO SPEAK!

OH YEAH! THAT IS DEFINITELY BETTER! MUCH BETTER THAN I'D HOPED!

MUST'VE BEEN SOMETHING IN THE TEA, 'CAUSE I'M FEELING A LITTLE "RECHARGED" MYSELF!

REALLY? WHY BOB, YOU ARE FULL OF SURPRISES TODAY, AREN'T YOU!


HONEY, YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET!


The next morning, a very weary and worn Bob awakens...
WOW! I DON'T THINK WE'VE HAD A NIGHT LIKE THAT SINCE OUR WEDDING NIGHT... 35 YEARS AGO!

THAT STUFF IS ***AMAZING!*** JUST THAT ***SMALL*** AMOUNT I GAVE HER SEEMS TO HAVE KNOCKED ALMOST ***TWENTY YEARS*** OFF HER! IMAGINE WHAT A ***LARGER*** DOSE WOULD'VE DONE!

WELL, I'VE KEPT HER AWAY FROM ***MIRRORS*** ALL NIGHT SO SHE HASN'T SEEN HER CHANGES YET, BUT I CAN'T DO THAT MUCH LONGER!

AT SOME POINT SHE'S GOING TO SEE HERSELF AND START ASKING ***QUESTIONS***... IF SHE DOESN'T COMPLETELY ***FREAK OUT***, THAT IS!


I HAVE AN IDEA HOW TO EXPLAIN THINGS! IT SHOULD KEEP HER FROM GETTING TOO ANGRY WITH ME... IF THAT'S THE DIRECTION SHE GOES!
BUT THEN THAT WOULD BE AS FAR AS I COULD TAKE IT! I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN AWAY ANY FURTHER CHANGES!

HMMM... IT SEEMS A ***SHAME*** TO WASTE A ***PERFECT*** OPPORTUNITY LIKE THIS TO ***FINALLY*** HAVE THE WOMAN OF MY ***DREAMS!***

BUT COME TO THINK OF IT, SHE ***STILL*** HASN'T SEEN HERSELF, AND MY EXPLANATION WILL WORK ***REGARDLESS*** OF HOW MUCH SHE'S CHANGED, SO ***WHY NOT...?***

A few minutes later, Celia wakes up alone...

MMMM... BOB? HONEY? WHERE'D YOU GO?


RIGHT HERE, HONEY! THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE YOUR MORNING COFFEE IN BED FOR A CHANGE!
MY! FIRST IT'S A NIGHT I COULD ONLY DREAM OF AND NOW YOU'RE WAITING ON ME IN BED! I FEEL LIKE WE'RE NEWLYWEDS ALL OVER AGAIN! WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, BOB?


I DON'T KNOW... JUST FINALLY COMING TO MY SENSES AND LEARNING TO APPRECIATE YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE, HONEY! THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AND YOU STILL PUT UP WITH ME! YOU DESERVE ALL THIS AND SO MUCH MORE!


BETTER WATCH YOURSELF, MISTER! KEEP TALKING LIKE THAT AND WE MAY JUST END UP IN THIS BED ALL DAY! IT IS SATURDAY, AFTER ALL!

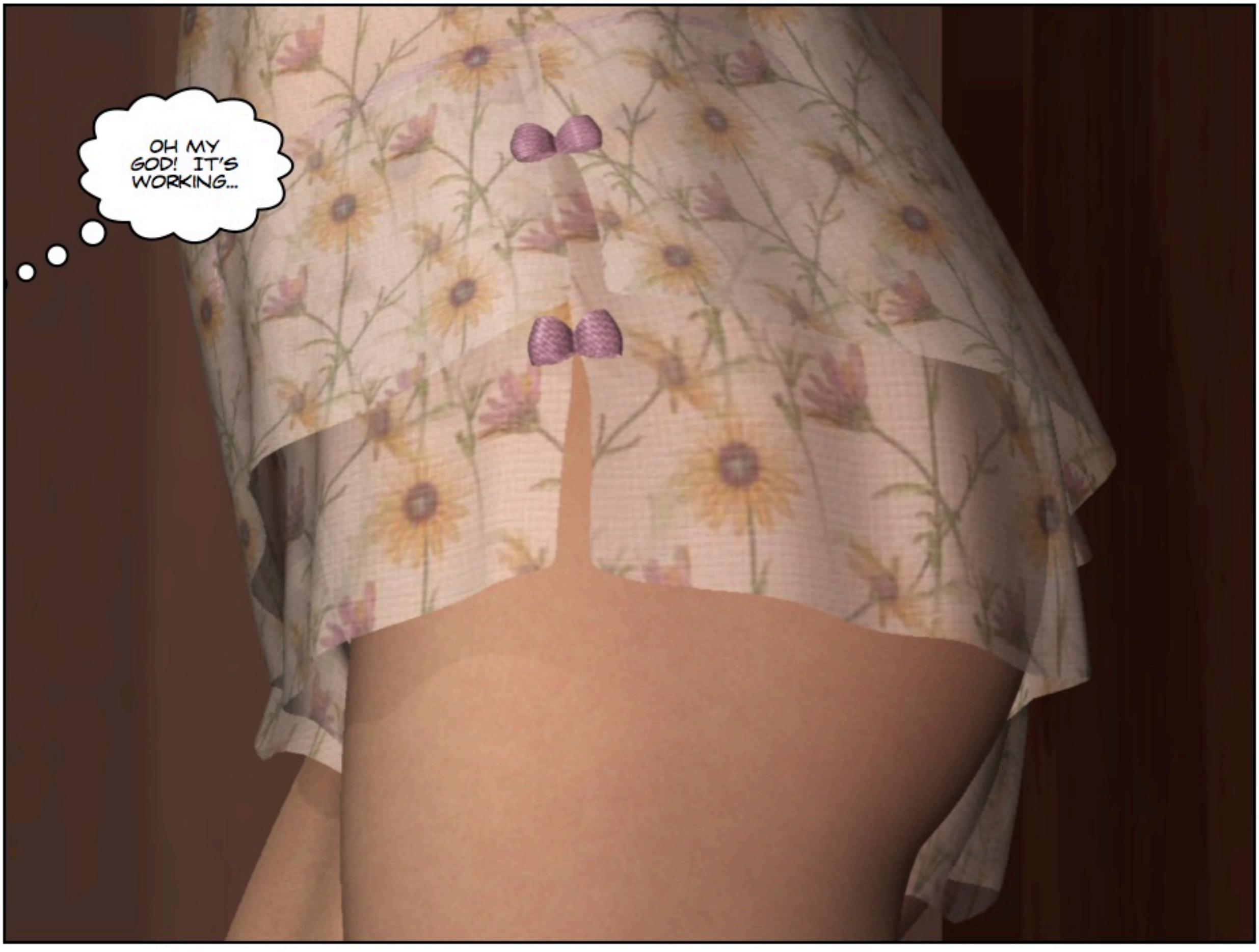

BUT BEFORE ANYTHING, I KNOW I DEFINITELY NEED A SHOWER! CARE TO JOIN ME?
NO, NO, NO! NOT YET! I CAN'T LET HER SEE HERSELF IN THE MIRROR FOR A FEW MORE MINUTES!
UMMM... HOLD ON A MINUTE, CELIA! I THINK I...!

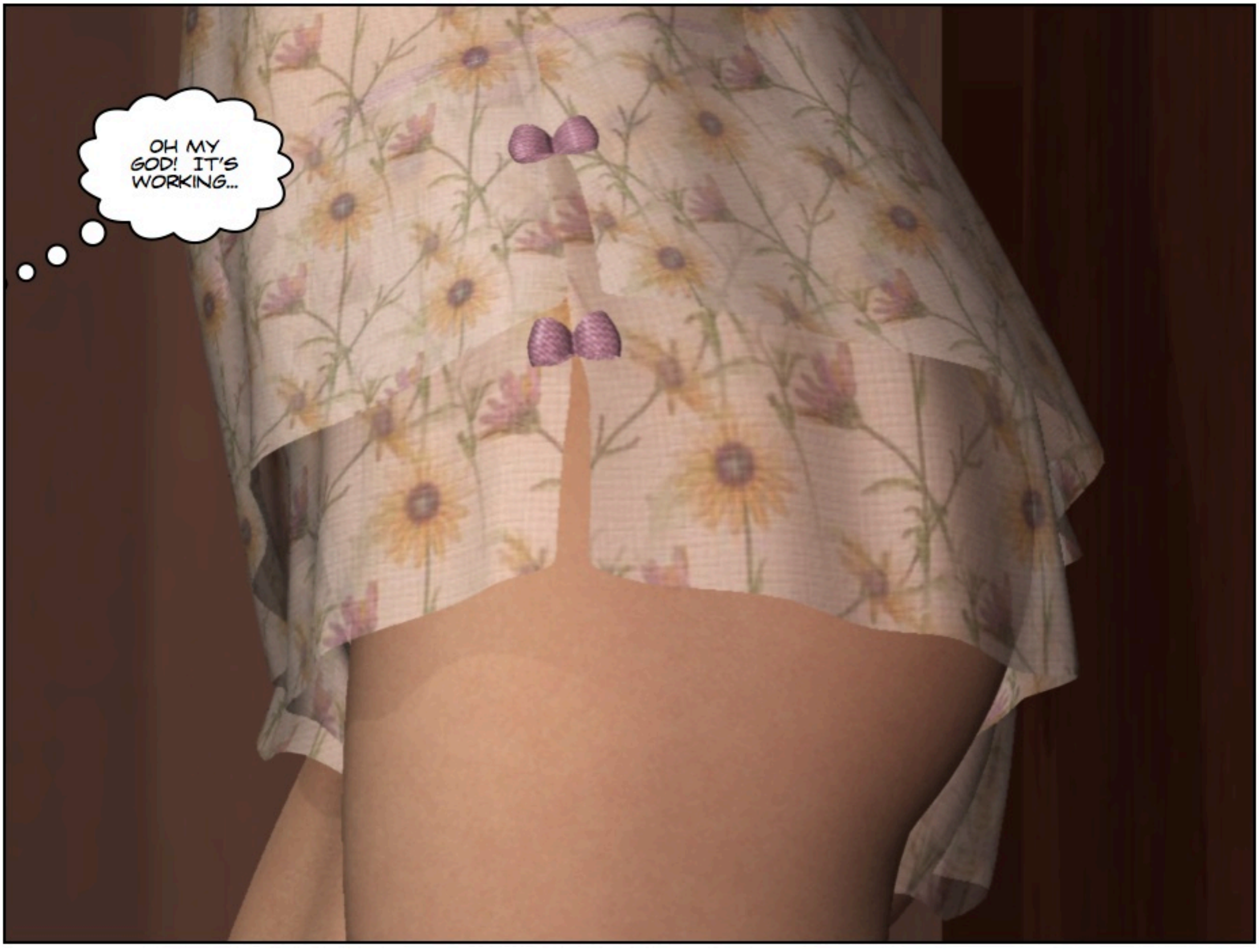

OH MY! NOT ANOTHER ONE!
WHAT? ANOTHER DIZZY SPELL? A HOT FLASH! LIKE LAST NIGHT?


YES, BUT... SOMETHING'S DIFFERENT THIS TIME! I FEEL SO... SO...!
WHAT, CELIA? WHAT DO YOU FEEL? IT DOESN'T HURT DOES IT?


NO, BUT I...!
OHHHHHH!

OH MY GOD! IT'S WORKING...


OH MY GOD! IT'S WORKING...


OH MY GOD! IT'S WORKING...


OH MY GOD! IT'S WORKING...


OH MY GOD! IT'S WORKING...


AND EVEN BETTER THAN LAST NIGHT!


AND EVEN BETTER THAN LAST NIGHT!


AND EVEN BETTER THAN LAST NIGHT!


AND EVEN BETTER THAN LAST NIGHT!


AND EVEN BETTER THAN LAST NIGHT!











HOLY SHIT! SHE NEVER LOOKED THAT GOOD EVEN WHEN SHE WAS IN HER TWENTIES! I'VE HIT THE JACKPOT!

MERCY! THAT WASN'T LIKE ANY HOT FLASH I'VE HAD BEFORE! IN FACT, I THINK I MIGHT'VE...!


WHAT ON EARTH?! WH... WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?
MY HANDS... MY BODY...!
UH-OH! CAT'S OUT OF THE BAG! TIME TO SEE IF I CAN PULL THIS OFF!
CELIA?! IS... IS THAT REALLY YOU?


MY FACE! I HAVE TO SEE MY FACE!


OH MY LORD! I... I DON'T EVEN LOOK LIKE ME ANYMORE! HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED?
HERE GOES... LET'S SEE IF SHE BUYS IT!
I... I THINK IT'S MY FAULT, CELIA!

YOUR FAULT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I PUT SOMETHING IN **MY** TEA! SOMETHING TO MAKE ME MORE... **VIRILE!** IT'S SOMETHING **NEW** OUR COMPANY IS TRYING TO DEVELOP! I MUST'VE GIVEN YOU THE **WRONG CUP** AND... AND **THIS** HAPPENED!

OH GOD, CELIA! I'M **SO SORRY!**


BUT HOW IS SOMETHING LIKE THIS POSSIBLE?
I DON'T KNOW, HONEY! THE PRODUCT WAS STILL IN TESTING... MAYBE THERE WAS A PROBLEM...!

A PROBLEM?! MY GOD, BOB... LOOK AT ME! NO ONE WILL RECOGNIZE ME! WHAT WILL WE TELL PEOPLE? WHAT ABOUT MY FRIENDS?

WELL... WE'LL COME UP WITH SOMETHING, CELIA... BELIEVE ME!

YOU'LL *FORGIVE* ME IF I HAVE A HARD TIME *BELIEVING* ANYTHING RIGHT NOW! SO, IF YOU'LL *EXCUSE* ME, I'D LIKE A LITTLE TIME *ALONE* TO SORT THINGS OUT!

SURE, HONEY! WHATEVER YOU WANT!


WELL... SHIT! THAT DIDN'T GO VERY WELL! COULD'VE BEEN WORSE, I GUESS... AT LEAST SHE'S NOT TOTALLY HYSTERICAL!
Slam!!


DAMN SMART OF ME, THOUGH, TO GIVE HER THAT SECOND DOSE BEFORE SHE FOUND OUT! SILLY TO GO THROUGH ALL THIS DRAMA IF SHE'D ONLY DROPPED A FEW YEARS!

AND CELIA'S A STRONG, **LEVEL-HEADED** WOMAN... ALWAYS HAS BEEN! SHE'LL GET OVER THE INITIAL **SHOCK**... EVENTUALLY!

AND THEN... **THEN** I'LL HAVE THE **HOT, YOUNG WIFE** I'VE **ALWAYS** WANTED.. AND **DESERVED!**


Meanwhile, in the bathroom...
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, CELIA! YOU'RE A MATURE, INTELLIGENT WOMAN... NOT SOME WEEPY, UNSTABLE SCHOOLGIRL!
ALL PHYSICAL EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY!

AS **SHOCKING** AND **UNSETTLING** AS THIS IS I CAN'T **HONESTLY** SAY THAT I'M **UNHAPPY** ABOUT IT!

I MEAN, **LOOK** AT ME... I'M **YOUNG**... AND MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN I'VE **EVER** BEEN IN MY LIFE! WHAT DO I **REALLY** HAVE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT?

AND **POOR BOB!** HE'S OUT THERE **WORRIED SICK** ABOUT **ME** AND BLAMING **HIMSELF** FOR ALL THIS WHEN IT WAS ONLY A FREAK **ACCIDENT!**

HE'S PROBABLY A **BASKET CASE** BY NOW! I NEED TO STOP BEING **SO SELFISH** AND THINK ABOUT **HIM** NOW!


BOB?
CELIA! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?


I ADMIT IT WAS A TREMENDOUS SHOCK TO SEE MYSELF LIKE THIS, BUT I'LL BE OKAY! IT'S YOU I'M WORRIED ABOUT!
WELL... OKAY! I SUPPOSE THAT WILL MAKE ME FEEL BETTER... EVENTUALLY!

NONSENSE! THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT, HONEY! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, PURE AND SIMPLE! I'M COMING TO TERMS WITH IT, SO YOU SHOULD, TOO!

YES! I KNEW SHE'D COME AROUND! DO I KNOW HER, OR WHAT?

I KNOW, BUT I CAN'T GET OVER THE FACT THAT YOU COULD'VE BEEN HURT BY MY SELFISHNESS AND INCOMPETENCE!


BOB, I'M NOT HURT! IN FACT, I'VE NEVER FELT BETTER IN MY LIFE!
REALLY?


REALLY! BUT IF IT WILL ALLEVIATE YOUR WORRIES, FIRST THING MONDAY MORNING I'LL GO GET A CHECKUP WHILE YOU DO SOME RESEARCH AT WORK TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED AND IF I'M IN ANY DANGER!
WELL... OKAY! I GUESS THAT WILL EVENTUALLY MAKE ME FEEL BETTER!


GOOD!
WHOA!!


BUT UNTIL THEN, YOUR SUDDENLY YOUNG AND SEXY WIFE WILL JUST HAVE TO COME UP WITH SOME CREATIVE WAYS TO MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER!
OH YEAH?


OH...
YEAH!



A Tangled Web

Chapter Two

by CBlack

Later that morning, a weary Bob waits on his wife...

C'MON, CELIA! THE SOONER WE LEAVE, THE MORE TIME WE'LL HAVE IN THE CITY!

I'M ALMOST READY! KEEP YOUR PANTS ON!

KEEP MY PANTS ON? ***JESUS!*** AFTER THAT ***MARATHON*** SHE PUT ME THROUGH, IT'LL BE A WHILE BEFORE I EVEN ***THINK*** ABOUT TAKING MY PANTS OFF AGAIN!

I MIGHT ***SERIOUSLY*** HAVE TO CONSIDER SOME KIND OF ***"MEDICATION"*** JUST TO KEEP UP WITH HER! THOSE TV ADS ABOUT THE ***"THREE HOUR ERECTIONS"*** AREN'T LOOKING SO SILLY ***NOW!***

OKAY, I'M READY! THIS IS PRETTY MUCH THE ONLY THING I HAD THAT EVEN COMES **CLOSE** TO FITTING! I HOPE IT'S OKAY!

YOU LOOK **FINE!**


BESIDES, LIKE I SAID, WE'LL DO SOME SHOPPING FOR YOU ONCE WE GET TO THE CITY! MAYBE FIND YOU A FEW THINGS A LITTLE MORE "AGE-APPROPRIATE"!
THEN WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? LET'S GO!

SPENDING THE REST OF THE WEEKEND IN THE CITY IS A ***WONDERFUL*** IDEA, HONEY! IT'S TOO BAD WE DON'T DO IT MORE OFTEN!

I'VE BEEN CONSUMED BY MY ***STUPID*** JOB FOR ***FAR*** TOO LONG, BUT THIS ACCIDENT HAS BEEN A ***WAKE-UP CALL***! FROM NOW ON, I'LL MAKE MORE TIME FOR US TO BE ***TOGETHER***! YOU'LL SEE!

A WEEKEND ALONE WILL **ALSO** GIVE US A CHANCE TO THINK ALL THIS THROUGH... FIGURE OUT WHAT WE'RE GOING TO **TELL** PEOPLE! WE'RE NOT LIKELY TO RUN INTO ANYONE WE KNOW IN THE CITY, SO IT'LL BUY US SOME TIME!

AS MUCH AS I'D **LOVE** TO BE SEEN OUT WITH MY NEW **HOT, YOUNG WIFE,** IT'D RAISE TOO MANY **QUESTIONS!** BUT **SOON...!**


ANY TIME WITH YOU, IS TIME WELL SPENT, HONEY!
I COULDN'T AGREE MORE, LOVE!
NOW, THAT IS!

At one of the swankier dress boutiques in the city...

YOU KNOW, I THINK THIS IS THE VERY ***FIRST*** TIME YOU'VE EVER ***WILLINGLY*** COME SHOPPING WITH ME!

WELL, DON'T EXPECT IT TO BE A ***RECURRING*** EVENT! I JUST WANTED TO BE WITH YOU THE FIRST TIME WITH YOUR ***"NEW LOOK"*** AND HELP YOU MAKE SOME DECISIONS!

AND TO MAKE ***DAMN SURE*** YOU DON'T JUST BUY YOUR USUAL ***"OLD LADY"*** STUFF IN YOUR NEW SIZE!


BUT ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO COME HERE? THE PRICE OF THESE CLOTHES IS OUTRAGEOUS, AND DO YOU REALLY THINK I COULD WEAR SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT THE COST! I'VE SOCKED AWAY MORE THAN ENOUGH IN OUR RAINY-DAY FUND!
SO LET'S JUST IGNORE THE PRICE TAGS AND CONCENTRATE ON MAKING YOU LOOK INCREDIBLE!


WELL... ALL RIGHT! IF YOU SAY SO!

GOOD AFTERNOON! MY NAME IS GWEN! HOW CAN I HELP YOU TODAY?

WELL GWEN, MY YOUNG BRIDE HERE NEEDS A NEW WARDROBE! DAILY WEAR, EVENING WEAR, AND... WELL, EVERYTHING! PRICE IS NO OBJECT!

REALLY? WELL, YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE, SIR! WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO START?

HMMM... HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT LITTLE NUMBER RIGHT OVER THERE?

OH, BOB! REALLY? DON'T YOU THINK IT'S A LITTLE... YOUNG FOR ME?


OH, ON THE CONTRARY! THAT DRESS WAS MADE FOR SOMEONE WITH A FABULOUS FIGURE LIKE YOURS! YOU'LL LOOK AMAZING IN IT!
YOU REALLY THINK SO?


OF COURSE! SO LET'S TAKE YOUR MEASUREMENTS AND GET STARTED, SHALL WE?
SIR, YOU CAN MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE RIGHT OVER THERE! WE SHOULDN'T BE TOO LONG!
BUT...!


PRETTY NICE! ALL THIS PLACE NEEDS IS A BIG SCREEN AND I'D BE SET!

Not too much later (in shopping terms , that is...)

I'M SORRY WE TOOK SO LONG, SIR! BUT I WANTED TO FIND ***JUST*** THE RIGHT MATCHING *SHOES* AND ***STOCKINGS*** TO GO WITH THAT OUTFIT!

HUH? WHAT...?


YOUR WIFE HASN'T SEEN HERSELF YET BECAUSE I WANTED HER TO SEE YOUR REACTION FIRST! HOWEVER, I THINK YOU'LL BOTH BE PLEASED!
HOLY...!

BE **HONEST**, HONEY! I MEAN, **I** FEEL A LITTLE **SILLY**! AND THESE **SHOES**... WHY, I'M SURPRISED I HAVEN'T BROKEN MY **NECK** YET, AND...

JUST **TURN AROUND** AND SEE FOR YOURSELF, HONEY!

OH! MY GOODNESS! THAT'S REALLY ME?

OH **YEAH,** HONEY! THAT'S REALLY **YOU!** EVERY **GORGEOUS** INCH!

I.. I HAD NO *IDEA* I COULD LOOK *SO...!* I MEAN, I'VE *NEVER...!*

BUT... I DO LOOK GOOD, DON'T I?

HONEY... YOU LOOK DROP-DEAD AMAZING!

SO, YOU REALLY *LIKE* THE WAY I'M DRESSED, *HMMM?*

DEFINITELY!

AND YOU **DID** SAY, **PRICE** WAS NO OBJECT? **RIGHT?**

I **DID**, DIDN'T I...!

WELL THEN... SINCE I'VE GOT A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF WHAT **YOU** LIKE, I THINK **WE** CAN MANAGE FROM HERE ON OUT!

REALLY? YOU'RE SURE?


I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU DISLIKE SHOPPING WITH ME, AND YOU'VE BEEN A SWEETIE TO STICK IT OUT THIS LONG!


SO WHY DON'T YOU GO ON BACK TO THE HOTEL, OR ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO DO, AND I'LL MEET YOU BACK THERE IN A COUPLE OF HOURS! OKAY?


BABY,
YOU'VE GOT
A DEAL!

Several hours later, in the hotel bar...

"A COUPLE OF HOURS," SHE SAID! THE LAST TIME I CHECKED, A *COUPLE* DIDN'T MEAN *FIVE!*

OH WELL, I SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN! AT LEAST SHE ***TEXTED*** ME AND SAID SHE'D BE RUNNING LATER THAN SHE THOUGHT!

GAVE ME PLENTY OF TIME TO CATCH THE ***CUBS*** GAME AT ***HOOTERS***, GET CLEANED UP AND CHANGED AND MEET HER HERE FOR A LATE DINNER!

I **STILL** CAN'T GET OVER HOW **HOT** CELIA LOOKED THIS AFTERNOON! **CHRIST!** I ALMOST **LOST MY LOAD** RIGHT THERE IN THE STORE WHEN SHE CAME OUT IN THAT DRESS!

I KNOW I TOLD HER WE HAD **PLENTY** IN THE "RAINY-DAY" FUND, BUT **HELL**... IF IT MEANS SHE'LL LOOK AND DRESS LIKE **THAT** EVERY DAMN DAY... SHE CAN SPEND THE **"RAINY-DAY"** FUND, THE **"NEST-EGG"** AND MY **WHOLE GODDAMN RETIREMENT** SAVINGS! IT'LL **TOTALLY** BE WORTH IT!

BUT **SHIT**... I SHOULDN'T GET MY **HOPES** UP LIKE THAT! EVEN THOUGH THESE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS HAVE BEEN **INCREDIBLE**, WE'RE STILL A **LONG** WAY FROM EVERYTHING WORKING OUT THE WAY **I** WANT!

.....


ASSUMING THE COMPANY DOESN'T FIND OUT WHAT I'VE DONE AND THE FORMULA DOESN'T WEAR OFF IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, CELIA IS STILL CELIA!
REGARDLESS OF ALL SHE'S BEEN THROUGH, SHE'S STILL THE SENSIBLE, LEVEL-HEADED WOMAN I MARRIED 35 YEARS AGO! THERE'S NO WAY SHE'S GOING TO BE COMFORTABLE FLAUNTING HER NEW LOOKS ON A DAILY BASIS!

HELL, ONCE SHE GOT OVER THE INITIAL ***THRILL*** OF SEEING HER NEW REFLECTION, SHE PROBABLY ONLY BOUGHT A COUPLE OF THINGS EVEN ***REMOTELY*** RACY AND SPENT THE REST OF HER TIME PICKING OUT THE USUAL ***SHAPELESS, EARTH-TONED CASUAL WEAR*** SHE LOVES SO MUCH!

WHAT WAS I THINKING? SHE PROBABLY SPENT A FORTUNE ON A BUNCH OF STUFF I'M GOING TO HATE! WHY DIDN'T I STAY AND SUPERVISE HER PURCHASES? I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!

EXCUSE ME... IS THIS SEAT TAKEN?


WELL IT'S ABOUT DAMN TIME YOU DECIDED TO SHOW...!

...UP?!
OH MY...!

SORRY I'M LATE, BUT THE **LOOK** ON YOUR FACE TELLS ME THE WAIT WAS **WORTH IT!** AM I RIGHT?

OH MY GOD, CELIA! YOU'RE...! I MEAN, THAT OUTFIT IS SO...!

RED? I KNOW! IT'S POSITIVELY DECADENT, ISN'T IT? I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET GWEN TALK ME INTO BUYING THIS, MUCH LESS ACTUALLY WEARING IT!

I'M **GLAD** SHE DID! YOU LOOK **AMAZING! GORGEOUS! SEXY!**

WELL, IT'S **ONE** THING TO DRESS UP LIKE THIS IN A SHOP OR AT HOME FOR YOUR HUSBAND, BUT NOW THAT WE'RE OUT HERE IN **PUBLIC,** WELL... I'M STARTING TO FEEL A LITTLE **SELF-CONSCIOUS!**

WOULD YOU MIND **TERRIBLY**, IF WE **SKIPPED** THE NIGHT OUT AND JUST WENT BACK TO THE HOTEL? **PLEASE?**

BUT I HAD THE **WHOLE EVENING** PLANNED OUT! DRINKS, DINNER... MAYBE EVEN SOME **DANCING!**

DAMN IT, WOMAN! I **KNEW** YOU'D DO THIS TO ME! I WANT PEOPLE TO **SEE** ME WITH THIS **NEW, IMPROVED AND SMOKIN' HOT BABE** YOU'VE BECOME!


PLEASE, BOB? I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU, I PROMISE! IF YOU WANT, I CAN GIVE YOU A PERSONAL FASHION SHOW OF ALL THE THINGS I BOUGHT TODAY!
ALL RIGHT, I GUESS SO!
HUMPH! BETTER THAN NOTHING, I GUESS!


THANK YOU, HONEY!
AND THANK GOODNESS!
I NEED TO USE THE CAN BEFORE WE GO, SO I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW MINUTES!

BOB MAY TRULY BELIEVE I CAN PULL THIS LOOK OFF, BUT HE'S ***BIASED*** AND FORGETS THAT INSIDE HERE I'M ***STILL*** A MATURE ***60-YEAR OLD WOMAN!***

I MAY ***LOOK*** TWENTY-FIVE, BUT I ***NEVER*** WORE CLOTHES LIKE ***THIS*** WHEN I TRULY WAS THIS AGE! IT FEELS LIKE I'M WALKING AROUND IN MY ***UNDERWEAR!***

I GOT **SWEPT AWAY** BY THE WAY I LOOK IN THE MIRROR... AND THE WAY **BOB** LOOKS AT ME NOW! BUT THIS **ISN'T** WHO I AM! WE NEED TO GET BACK TO THE HOTEL BEFORE I MAKE A COMPLETE **FOOL** OF MYSELF!

EXCUSE ME, MISS! BUT CAN WE BUY YOU A **DRINK?**


OH, NO THANK YOU, YOUNG... UMM! I MEAN, YOU TWO ARE TOO KIND, BUT I WAS JUST GETTING READY TO LEAVE!
CASE IN POINT... ALMOST REFERRING TO THESE TWO AS "YOUNG MEN" IS EXACTLY WHAT I WAS AFRAID OF!
THEY'RE SURE TO SEE ME FOR THE IMPOSTER THAT I AM!


AH! LEAVING WITH YOUR.. FATHER, THEN?
MY FATHER? HEAVENS, NO! HE'S...
CAREFUL, CELIA!
HE'S JUST MY... DATE FOR THE EVENING!

LUCKY MAN! MIND IF WE KEEP YOU COMPANY UNTIL HE RETURNS?

WHY, NO... NOT AT ALL!

WHY DID I SAY THAT? MAYBE BECAUSE I... I'M PLEASED THAT THEY HAVEN'T SEEN THROUGH THE FACADE? MAYBE I'M NOT AS MUCH OF A FRAUD AS I THOUGHT!

GREAT! I'M STEVE AND THIS IS LANCE! WE'RE IN TOWN FOR A SPORTSWRITERS CONVENTION!

SPORTSWRITERS? THAT SOUNDS FASCINATING! I'M... CELIA!

AND WE'LL JUST LEAVE IT AT THAT FOR NOW!

CELIA... THAT'S A LOVELY NAME! AND WHERE ARE YOU FROM, CELIA? WHAT DO YOU DO?

OH, I'M PRETTY MUCH A LOCAL GIRL, AND I WORK... DOWNTOWN!

NICE AND VAGUE, CELIA! LET THEIR IMAGINATIONS FILL IN THE DETAILS FOR YOU!

THAT'S... KINDA WHAT WE THOUGHT! SO, IF YOUR "DATE" ENDS EARLY, ANY CHANCE OF "HOOKING UP" WITH YOU LATER?

OR MAYBE WE CAN OUTBID YOUR MIDDLE-AGED "FRIEND" FOR YOUR SERVICES! I GUARANTEE WE CAN DEFINITELY MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE!

OH MY GOD! THEY... THEY THINK I'M A HOOKER!

I GUESS I **SHOULDN'T** BE ALL THAT SURPRISED CONSIDERING HOW I'M **DRESSED** AND HOW **VAGUE** I'VE BEEN ABOUT MYSELF!

AND I KNOW I **SHOULD** BE INSULTED AND **MORTIFIED!** BUT ... I'M **NOT!** THE FACT THAT **I** COULD BE MISTAKEN FOR A "LADY OF THE EVENING" IS KIND OF **EXCITING** AND, IN A **BIZARRE** KIND OF WAY, A LITTLE **FLATTERING!**

IT'S CERTAINLY **BETTER** THAN BEING THOUGHT OF AS THE **SIXTY-YEAR OLD WOMAN** I TRULY AM!


HMMM... STRANGELY ENOUGH, I'M ALSO FINDING THEIR PERCEPTION OF ME TO BE VERY... AROUSING!
SO... WHAT DO YOU SAY, CELIA?

THESE BOYS WOULD **NEVER** HAVE EVEN **GLANCED** MY WAY BEFORE! WHY NOT HAVE A LITTLE **FUN?**

AS **TEMPTING** AS YOUR OFFER IS, GENTLEMEN, I'M AFRAID MY ENTIRE EVENING IS ALREADY **SPOKEN FOR**, AND, AS A RULE, I **DON'T** ENGAGE IN **BIDDING WARS!**

THEY **ALWAYS** LEAD TO HURT FEELINGS WHICH IN TURN IS **BAD FOR BUSINESS!**


I'M SURE YOU BOYS UNDERSTAND!
OH, DEFINITELY! WE'RE DISAPPOINTED, OF COURSE, BUT WE GET IT! MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME!


OH NO! THEY MUSTN'T LEAVE YET! NOT WHEN I'M ENJOYING MYSELF SO MUCH!
BUT I DON'T THINK ONE LITTLE DRINK WOULD HURT WHILE I WAIT FOR MY DATE TO RETURN!


YOU'RE ON!

MAN! **NOW** I REMEMBER WHY I DON'T EAT AT **HOOTERS** THAT MUCH! HOPE CELIA'S NOT **TOO** UPSET ABOUT WAITING SO LONG FOR ME!


WHAT THE HELL...?!


CELIA? WHAT'S GOING ON?
OH... HI THERE! WE WERE BEGINNING TO WONDER WHEN YOU'D COME BACK!

WELL I'M BACK **NOW!** AND IF YOU GENTLEMEN DON'T MIND, **I'D** LIKE TO SPEND SOME TIME **ALONE** WITH MY...

OH, NO NEED TO BE **DELICATE,** BOB! THEY KNOW **ALL** ABOUT ME AND OUR **"ARRANGEMENT"** AND WERE JUST KEEPING ME COMPANY UNTIL YOU GOT BACK!

OUR... WHAT?

WELL, ONE PARTY ENDS BUT ANOTHER BEGINS! IT WAS DELIGHTFUL MEETING YOU TWO!

YOU TOO, CELIA! MAYBE WE'LL LOOK YOU UP NEXT TIME WE'RE IN TOWN!


YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME, BOYS! HAVE A NICE CONVENTION!


CELIA... WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?
SHHH! JUST PLAY ALONG, HONEY! I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING IN THE ELEVATOR!


OKAY, WE'RE IN THE ELEVATOR! NOW, DO YOU MIND TELLING ME WHAT WAS GOING ON OUT THERE? WHO THE HELL WERE THOSE GUYS?
JUST A COUPLE OF FRIENDLY BOYS WHO HELPED PUT ME IN THE RIGHT FRAME OF MIND!
NOW, C'MERE!


RIGHT FRAME OF MIND FOR WHAT?
OH BOB, HONEY! YOU ARE SO ABOUT TO FIND OUT!



Buzzzzzzzz!!

YEP... IT STOPPED!

DAMN! SURE AS HELL WISH WE'D GOTTEN HER BUSINESS CARD!

NO SHIT!

The next morning...




HMMM... WHAT?!
GOOD MORNING, SLEEPY HEAD! HOW DO YOU FEEL THIS MORNING?

LIKE I'VE BEEN THROUGH AN ***IRON MAN TRIATHLON***... WITHOUT ANY ***TRAINING!***

MMMM... ***ME TOO!*** AND I'M READY FOR ***ANOTHER ONE!*** HOW ABOUT YOU?

MY GOD, CELIA! **AGAIN?!** I CAN BARELY **MOVE,** MUCH LESS GO **ANOTHER** ROUND!

AWWW... **POOR BOB!** STILL RECOVERING FROM OUR LITTLE GAME OF **"CALL GIRL AND THE TRAVELING BUSINESSMAN"?** YOU SEEMED TO ENJOY IT LAST NIGHT!


AFTER THE INITIAL SHOCK AND CONFUSION...? HELL YEAH, I ENJOYED IT! AND I HOPE WE DO IT AGAIN... OFTEN!


BUT RIGHT NOW, I'M JUST NOT UP FOR IT! I'M SORRY CELIA!
I UNDERSTAND, HONEY! REALLY, I DO!


TELL YOU WHAT, I'M GOING TO GO TAKE A SHOWER AND GET CLEANED UP! THEN WE'LL CONCENTRATE ON BREAKFAST, OKAY?
SOUNDS PERFECT, HONEY!


JESUS! IF ANYONE HAD TOLD ME I'D EVER BE TURNING DOWN A WOMAN LIKE THAT, FOR ANY REASON, I'D HAVE TOLD 'EM THEY WERE INSANE! BUT THE LIBIDO ON THAT WOMAN... CHRIST!
THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE FILES I READ ABOUT F-RHO-DT-5 AFFECTING THE SUBJECT'S SEX DRIVES LIKE THAT! I JUST CAN'T KEEP UP WITH HER!


ONE THING'S FOR *DAMN* SURE, FIRST THING TOMORROW, I'VE GOT TO SEE IF THE COMPANY'S GOT ANYTHING LIKE *F-RHO-DT-5* FOR *MEN!*

CELIA MAY LOVE ME ***UNCONDITIONALLY,*** BUT SHE'S NOW SO ***YOUNG*** AND ***VIBRANT!*** IF I CAN'T KEEP HER ***SATISFIED,*** THAT SEXUAL ***OVERDRIVE*** OF HERS JUST MIGHT FORCE HER TO LOOK ***ELSEWHERE!*** AND I DON'T THINK I COULD ***HANDLE*** THAT!


FEELING ANY BETTER, HONEY?
A LITTLE, BUT I...

WHOA! WHERE DID YOU GET THAT?

OH, IT'S JUST ONE OF THE THINGS I BOUGHT YESTERDAY! I PROMISED YOU A **FASHION SHOW** LAST NIGHT, BUT WE GOT A WEE BIT... **DISTRACTED!** SO I THOUGHT I'D GIVE A LITTLE **PREVIEW** THIS MORNING!

SO... YOU LIKE IT?

HOLY... I MEAN, OF COURSE I LOVE IT, CELIA! YOU LOOK... AMAZING IN IT! BUT I STILL DON'T THINK I CAN, WELL... YOU KNOW...!

OH, DON'T WORRY, HONEY! I DON'T HAVE ANY **ULTERIOR MOTIVES!** I JUST WANTED TO **MODEL** IT FOR YOU... MAKE SURE YOU **APPROVED!**

OH, I **APPROVE,** HONEY! MOST **DEFINITELY!**

ARE YOU **SURE?** HOW'S IT LOOK FROM **BEHIND?** DOES IT FIT OKAY?

OH MY GOD, WOMAN! YOU'RE **KILLING** ME!

IT FITS... **WONDERFULLY,** CELIA!

WELL, **THAT'S** GOOD! THEY DON'T LET YOU TRY ON THINGS LIKE **THIS** IN THE STORE, SO I WASN'T SURE IT WAS THE RIGHT SIZE! I **ALMOST** FEEL LIKE I'M **FALLING OUT** OF IT!

IT'S A **PERFECT** FIT, HONEY! **BELIEVE** ME!

YOU KNOW **EXACTLY** HOW WELL IT FITS, YOU **SAUCY MINX!**

YOU DON'T THINK IT'S A LITTLE TOO.. ***EXTREME***, DO YOU? FOR SOMEONE LIKE ***ME***, I MEAN! MAYBE I SHOULD TAKE IT BACK!

DON'T YOU DARE!

OH MY! LOOK WHAT I FOUND! AND HERE I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T "UP" FOR ANY MORE PLAYTIME THIS MORNING!

OHHHH! YOU, YOUNG LADY... THE WAY YOU'VE LEARNED TO MANIPULATE ME SO EASILY...! IT'S ALMOST EVIL!

WHY, **WHATEVER** ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, HONEY? ALL I WANT TO DO IS **PLEASE** YOU, **THAT'S** ALL!

UH-HUH! JUST DON'T **"PLEASE"** ME INTO A **HEART ATTACK,** OKAY! I WANT TO STICK AROUND AND **ENJOY** THE NEW YOU FOR A **LONG, LONG TIME!**

OH, DON'T **WORRY,** HONEY! I'LL MAKE **SURE** YOU ENJOY ME AS **MUCH** AS POSSIBLE! STARTING **RIGHT NOW...!**


OH SHIT!
I'VE CREATED A
MONSTER!

The next morning...

HMMM , I'VE BEEN LOOKING THROUGH THESE FILES ALL MORNING AND ACCORDING TO EVERYTHING I CAN FIND IN HERE, THERE'S BEEN ABSOLUTELY ***NO ADVERSE REACTIONS*** TO ***F-RHO-DT-5*** SO FAR!

THE ONLY MENTION OF INCREASED ***SEXUAL*** ACTIVITY HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO THE INCREASED VITALITY AND ***NATURAL PREDISPOSITION*** OF THE SUBJECTS!

SO THEY'RE IMPLYING MY CELIA'S ALWAYS BEEN A ***NYMPHO*** AT HEART? THAT ***HARDLY*** SOUNDS LIKE THE WOMAN I'VE KNOWN FOR ALMOST ***FORTY YEARS!***


IT LOOKS LIKE THEY WON'T BE ANALYZING THE RESULTS OF THIS LAST TEST UNTIL *LATER* THIS WEEK, SO I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO KEEP CHECKING BACK TO SEE IF ANY *IRREGULARITIES* ARE REPORTED!

IN THE MEANTIME, LET'S SEE IF THEY'RE MAKING ANYTHING LILKE **F-RHO-DT-5** FOR **MEN!** AT THE VERY LEAST, **SOMETHING** TO HELP ME KEEP UP WITH MY WIFE AND HER NEW **APPETITES!**

zn-sunny

BUZZZZ!!

EXCUSE ME, BOB, BUT THERE'S SOMEONE HERE TO SEE YOU!

ME? NO ONE EVER COMES TO SEE ***ME! SHIT!*** WHAT IF THEY FOUND OUT WHAT I'VE DONE AND IT'S ***SECURITY!?***

WHAT? UMM, ***ME?*** A VISITOR? WHO... WHO ***IS*** IT, STACY?

SHE DIDN'T GIVE ME HER NAME, BUT I THINK IT'S A ***SALESPERSON*** OF SOME KIND! I TRIED TO TELL HER YOU WERE BUSY, BUT SHE'S ***VERY*** PERSISTENT! SHE'S HERE IN THE LOBBY!

A SALESPERSON? ***SHIT!*** PROBABLY ANOTHER REP FROM THE DAMN ***TIMESHARE COMPANY*** WANTING US TO BUY MORE! I'M ***THIS*** CLOSE TO ***SELLING*** THAT DAMN THING!

THANKS, STACY! I'LL BE RIGHT OUT!


SHE'S RIGHT OVER THERE, BOB!
THANKS, STACY!
I'LL JUST GIVE HER THE QUICK BRUSH-OFF... TELL HER WE'RE ALL MAXED OUT! THEN I CAN GET BACK TO MORE PRESSING NEEDS!

WOW! ON SECOND THOUGHT, LEGS LIKE THAT JUST MIGHT GET ME TO DOUBLE OUR INVESTMENT AFTER ALL!

HI THERE! I'M BOB VARNEY! AND YOU ARE...?


HI, MR. VARNEY! I'M SO SORRY FOR JUST DROPPING IN UNANNOUNCED LIKE THIS, BUT I WASN'T SURE YOU'D SEE ME IF I CALLED FIRST!
HOLY CRAP...!


MY NAME IS ANNIE MCCLURE AND I'M, WELL... THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING... I'M JOB HUNTING AND WAS HOPING YOU COULD HELP ME OUT!
ME? WH... WHY ME?


WELL, YOUR WIFE IS A GOOD FRIEND OF MY MOTHER'S AND SHE RECOMMENDED, NO... INSISTED I COME DOWN AND SEE YOU!
SHE SAID MAYBE YOU COULD GIVE ME SOME POINTERS, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT!


WELL... I GUESS I COULD PUT IN A GOOD WORD FOR YOU IN HUMAN RESOURCES! WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH ME AND I'LL SHOW YOU THE WAY!


OH, THANK YOU, MR. VARNEY! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH THIS MEANS TO ME!

A moment later, in a locked storage room...

CELIA! WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YOU DOING HERE? DRESSED LIKE THIS? AND WHAT DID YOU DO TO YOUR HAIR?

I WAS OUT SHOPPING AND DECIDED I NEEDED A NEW HAIRDO TO GO WITH MY NEW LOOK! LIKE IT?

LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE ON YOU, IT LOOKS ***GREAT,*** HONEY! BUT THAT DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHAT YOU'RE ***DOING*** HERE! AND WHAT WAS ALL THAT BIT ABOUT ***"ANNIE MCCLURE"*** AND LOOKING FOR A ***JOB?***

I WAS IN THE AREA AND JUST THOUGHT WE COULD GRAB A QUICK BITE FOR LUNCH!

I COULDN'T VERY WELL TELL THEM WHO I ***REALLY*** WAS WITHOUT RAISING A LOT OF UNWANTED ***QUESTIONS,*** SO I CAME UP WITH THAT LITTLE STORY AND USED MY MAIDEN NAME... CELIA ***ANNE*** MCCLURE! WHAT, YOU DIDN'T ***LIKE*** IT?

****SIGH!*** AS LONG AS IT WORKS AND NO ONE GETS ***SUSPICIOUS!*** BUT YOU ***CAN'T*** PULL SURPRISES LIKE THIS ANYMORE! IT'S TOO ***RISKY!***


I JUST WANTED TO HAVE *LUNCH* WITH MY HUSBAND! IS *THAT SO BAD?*
OF *COURSE* NOT! BUT YOU *KNOW* HOW BUSY I AM! I *NEVER* HAVE TIME TO GO OUT TO LUNCH! IN FACT, I REALLY *HAVE* TO GET BACK TO WORK!


WELL, IF WE CAN'T DO LUNCH, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE!
ARE YOU CRAZY? IN HERE? BUT I HAVE A... A CONFERENCE CALL IN A FEW MINUTES!


THAT'S WHY THEY'RE CALLED QUICKIES, HONEY! AND THAT'S ALSO WHY I "FORGOT" TO WEAR PANTIES TODAY! SEE?
OH MY GOD, CELIA! YOU REALLY...? I MEAN, WHAT POSSESSED YOU?


THERE WAS JUST NO WAY I COULD WAIT UNTIL YOU GOT HOME TONIGHT! I NEEDED MY HUSBAND... AND I NEEDED HIM NOW!
SIGH! YOU KNOW THERE'S JUST NO POSSIBLE WAY I CAN SAY NO TO YOU, DON'T YOU?


THAT'S WHAT I WAS COUNTING ON, LOVE!

A few minutes later...

THANK YOU *AGAIN* FOR YOUR HELP, MR. VARNEY! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH I *APPRECIATE* IT!

UH-HUH! GLAD TO HELP, MISS... UH, *MISS...!*


MCCLURE! ANNIE MCCLURE! AND PLEASE TELL YOUR WIFE HELLO FOR ME, AND THANK HER FOR LOANING YOU TO ME ON SHORT NOTICE!
UM... YES, I'LL, UH... I'LL DO THAT! GOODBYE, UHHH... ANNIE!


OOOOOO! I'M GONNA BE SORE FOR A WEEK!


YOU OKAY, BOB? YOU LOOK BEAT!
JUST TIRED, LOGAN! VERY, VERY TIRED!

A short while later...

I FOUND IT! THE COMPANY IS DEVELOPING A MALE VERSION OF THE F-RHO-DT-5 FORMULA! AND THEY'RE CALLING IT ADNS-12!

LET'S SEE... RESTORES VITALITY, MASCULINITY AND VIRILITY... GOOD! IN SOME CASES, YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE IS NOTICEABLE... PERFECT!

zn-sunny

UH-OH... BUT THERE'S ***ONE*** MAJOR DIFFERENCE... IT'S ONLY ***TEMPORARY!*** EFFECTS LAST ANYWHERE FROM TWO TO TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, BUT ***NONE*** LASTING LONGER THAN THAT!

OH WELL, I CAN MANAGE THINGS AS LONG AS I CAN GET MY HANDS ON ***ENOUGH*** OF IT! LET'S SEE WHEN THE NEXT BATCH IS COMING THROUGH...!

HOLY CRAP! MY TIMING COULDN'T BE BETTER! THEY'RE RUNNING TESTS TOMORROW AND A BATCH IS BEING SENT OUT THIS AFTERNOON!

AND I KNOW JUST HOW TO HANDLE THAT!

zn-sunny

Later that evening at home...

THIS IS ALMOST GETTING ***TOO*** EASY! "SOMEONE" COULD MAKE A HELLUVA LOT OF ***MONEY*** SELLING THESE FORMULAS IF THEY WERE SO INCLINED!

NOT SOMETHING ***I'D*** BE THINKING OF DOING... ***NOW,*** AT LEAST! BUT IT'S ALWAYS NICE TO HAVE A ***BACK-UP PLAN!***

CELIA?
HONEY... ARE
YOU HOME?

I'M IN THE
TUB, HONEY!

CARE TO JOIN ME?

TEMPTING, BUT I HAVE A COUPLE OF THINGS TO TAKE CARE OF! *SOME* THINGS I THINK YOU'LL *ENJOY!*

OOOOO! SOUNDS MYSTERIOUS! I'LL BE OUT IN A FEW MINUTES THEN!

TAKE YOUR TIME, HONEY! I'LL BE WAITING IN THE LIVING ROOM!

SO... HOW **MUCH** TO TAKE? IF I TAKE TOO MUCH, CELIA MAY NOT RECOGNIZE ME AND **FREAK OUT!** IT COULD ALSO BE **WASTEFUL** AND I NEED TO MAKE THIS STUFF **LAST!**

WELL, ASSUMING IT'S LIKE THE **F-RHO-DT-5**, I'LL JUST TAKE THE **SAME** INITIAL AMOUNT I GAVE CELIA... WITH JUST A **LITTLE** EXTRA... JUST IN CASE!


BOTTOMS UP!

HMPH! NOT MUCH TASTE TO IT! AND DON'T FEEL ANYTHING YET! BUT THE OTHER FORMULA DID TAKE A MINUTE OR TWO BEFORE CELIA...


WHOA! SO DIZZY
ALL OF A SUDDEN!
THIS MUST BE IT!
LET'S HOPE SO...!



BOB? HONEY? I HAVE A LITTLE *SURPRISE* OF MY OWN, TOO! WHERE ARE YOU?

RIGHT OVER HERE!


GASP! BOB? IS THAT REALLY YOU?


SURPRISE, BABY!
OH MY LORD! LOOK AT YOU!


YOU'RE SO MUCH YOUNGER... STRONGER... AND...


GASP! AND SO MUCH MORE!!


YOU DESERVE SOMEONE WHO COULD KEEP YOU HAPPY AND... FULFILLED! SO I WENT AND TRACKED DOWN SOME MORE OF THAT FORMULA FOR MYSELF! SO... YOU LIKE?
OH, HONEY! YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS! BUT... YEAH! I LIKE! I LIKE A LOT!


THEN WHY DON'T WE SEE IF I CAN WEAR YOU OUT FOR A CHANGE, HMMM?
MMMM... I'D LOVE FOR YOU TO TRY, MISTER!

And for the next few hours...

zn-sunny

He does just that!


OH MY LORD! I THINK... I THINK YOU WIN, HONEY! I'M EXHAUSTED!


WE BOTH WIN, BABE! TRUST ME!

But as they both finally fall asleep...







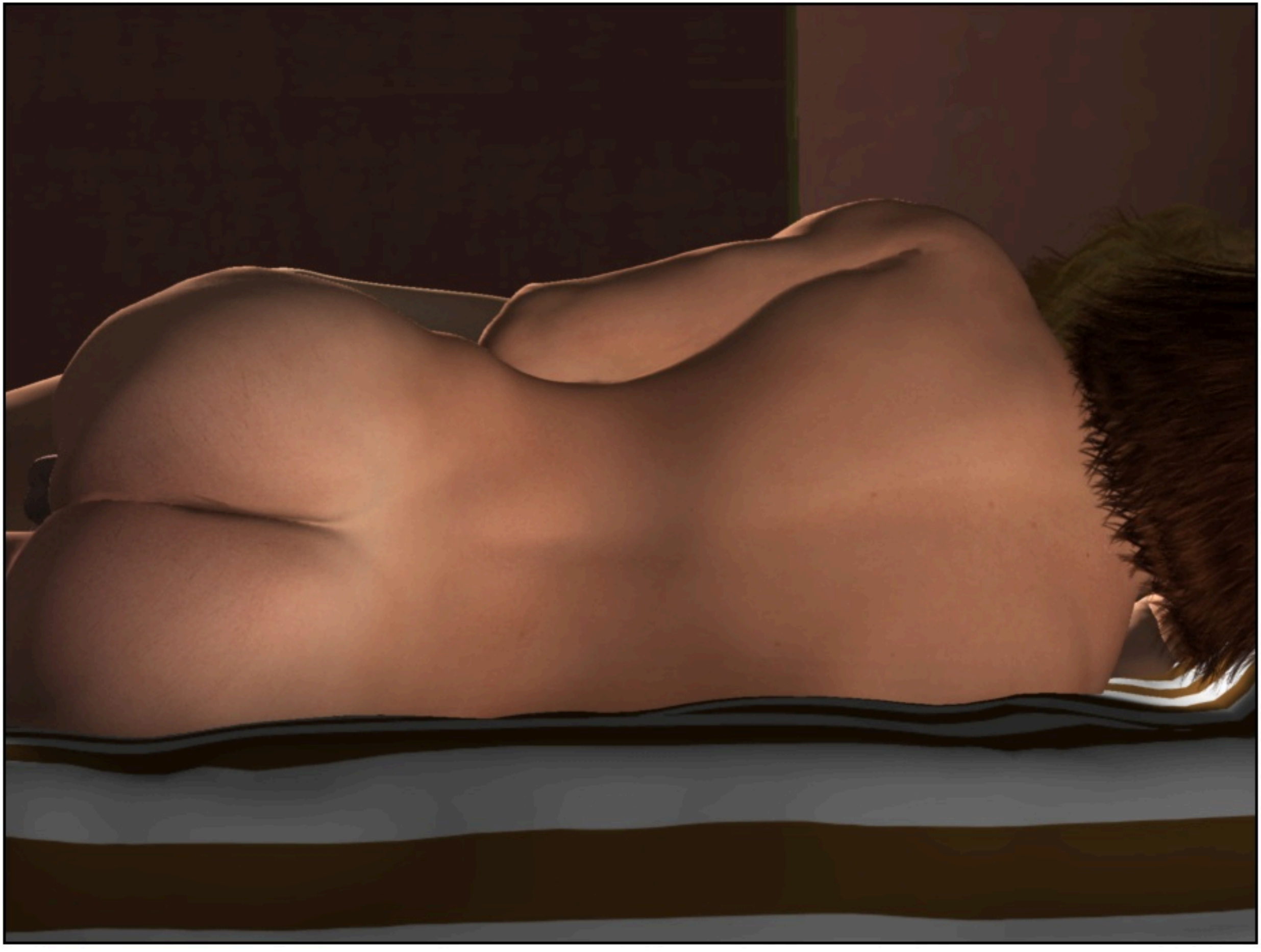






















A Tangled Web

Chapter Three

by CBlack

The next morning...

OH MAN! I *STILL* FEEL LIKE I TOOK A BEATING LAST NIGHT!


SHIT! NO WONDER! I'VE CHANGED BACK ALREADY! CRAP!
I DON'T WANT CELIA TO SEE ME LIKE THIS UNTIL I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO TELL HER THIS FORMULA IS ONLY TEMPORARY!
WELL, THAT'S EASILY TAKEN CARE OF!

LET'S SEE... ***THIS*** MUCH LASTED SOMEWHERE BETWEEN SIX AND TWELVE HOURS, SO ***THIS*** AMOUNT SHOULD MAKE SURE I STAY CHANGED ***ALL DAY!*** THAT'LL GIVE ME ***PLENTY*** OF TIME!

OF COURSE, I'LL HAVE TO CALL IN ***SICK,*** BUT... OH WELL!


AHHH, THE SACRIFICES I MAKE FOR MY WIFE!


MMMM... BOB? WHERE'D YOU GO?

RIGHT *HERE*, BABE! MISS ME?

MMM-HMMM!


SAY, WHY DON'T YOU BRING THAT THING RIGHT BACK OVER *HERE* WHERE IT BELONGS!
WHATEVER THE LADY WANTS!


AND THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT THIS LADY WANTS! ROWR!!


DOES THAT HIT THE SPOT, DARLIN'?
OOOOOOOOHH! YOU BETCHA!


OHHHHHHHH, YES!!


OH MY GOD!
OH YEAH! I'M ALMOST THERE TOO, BABY!

NO, BOB! STOP!

WHAT? STOP?! WHY?!

DID... DID YOU TAKE ANY *MORE* OF THAT FORMULA?

WHAT? UMM... WHY DO YOU ASK?


MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO LOOK FOR YOURSELF!


HOLY CRAP! I CHANGED AGAIN! I LOOK EVEN YOUNGER! WHAT THE HELL...?
SO, DID YOU TAKE MORE?

SIGH! I WAS **GOING** TO TELL YOU! THE STUFF **I'M** TAKING IS **DIFFERENT** FROM WHAT **YOU** TOOK! I... I COULDN'T FIND ANY MORE OF THAT ONE, BUT THIS ONE **SEEMED** TO DO THE SAME THING **EXCEPT...!**

EXCEPT **WHAT,** BOB?


FROM WHAT I FOUND OUT, YOURS IS PERMANENT BUT MINE IS JUST TEMPORARY!
TEMPORARY?


YEAH! WHEN I WOKE UP, I'D ALREADY CHANGED BACK, SO I TOOK SOME MORE! ACTUALLY, A LITTLE MORE THAN I TOOK LAST NIGHT! AFTER LAST NIGHT, I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO WAKE UP NEXT TO THAT DISAPPOINTING OLD MAN AGAIN!
THAT "DISAPPOINTING OLD MAN" YOU'RE DISPARAGING IS MY HUSBAND, AND I'LL THANK YOU NOT TO TALK ABOUT HIM THAT WAY!

I JUST MEANT...!

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEANT! WHAT I WANT ***YOU*** TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT I LOVE ***YOU***, BOB! ***REGARDLESS*** OF HOW YOU ***LOOK*** OR HOW ***AMAZING*** YOU ARE IN BED! YOU ***HAVE*** TO BELIEVE THAT, HONEY!

I'M **TRYING,** HONEY... BUT IT'S **TOUGH** WITH **YOU** LOOKING THE WAY YOU DO! I JUST DON'T WANT TO FEEL SO DAMN **OLD** WHEN I'M WITH YOU!

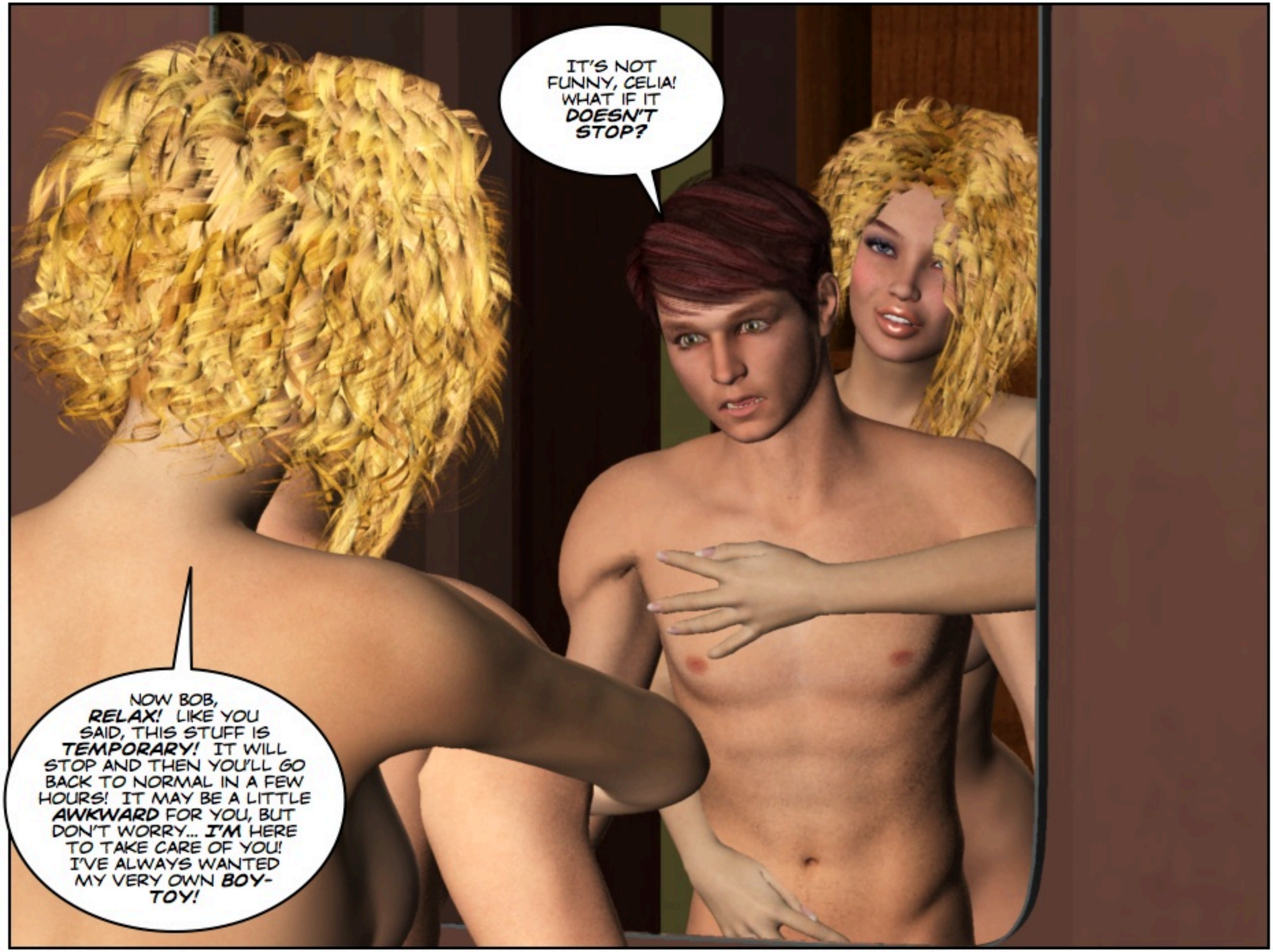
WELL, YOU *CERTAINLY* DON'T LOOK OLD AT ALL NOW! IN FACT, WE LOOK LIKE A COUPLE OF *KIDS* FRESH OUT OF *COLLEGE,* DON'T WE!


WHICH REMINDS ME, I'D BETTER GO CALL IN SICK! I CAN'T SHOW UP LOOKING LIKE THIS AND IT PROBABLY WON'T WEAR OFF UNTIL SOMETIME TONIGHT!
WELL OKAY, BUT HURRY BACK! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE HAD A COLLEGE BOY!


A few minutes later...
SORRY I TOOK SO LONG, HONEY, BUT THEY ALMOST DIDN'T BUY IT! MY VOICE KEPT CRACKING!
GIGGLE! UMM, I THINK I KNOW WHY! BETTER GO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK!

GODDAMN IT! WHEN IS THIS GONNA STOP?! I LOOK EVEN YOUNGER THAN YOU NOW!

OH, IT'S NOT ALL THAT BAD, LOVE! I'VE ALWAYS FANCIED YOUNGER MEN! ALWAYS FIGURED I COULD TEACH THEM A THING OR TWO!


IT'S NOT FUNNY, CELIA! WHAT IF IT DOESN'T STOP?
NOW BOB, RELAX! LIKE YOU SAID, THIS STUFF IS TEMPORARY! IT WILL STOP AND THEN YOU'LL GO BACK TO NORMAL IN A FEW HOURS! IT MAY BE A LITTLE AWKWARD FOR YOU, BUT DON'T WORRY... I'M HERE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU! I'VE ALWAYS WANTED MY VERY OWN BOY-TOY!


I'M GLAD SOMEONE'S ENJOYING THIS!
YOU NEED TO LIGHTEN UP, BOB! DON'T YOU SEE THE OPPORTUNITY HERE? WE'VE HAD A LOT OF FUN THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS WITH OUR LITTLE ROLE-PLAYING GAMES!

YOU **BET** I HAVE!

WELL, THIS JUST OPENS UP SOME **NEW OPTIONS!** I COULD BE THE SEXY, YOUNG **DIVORCEE** AND YOU'RE AN **INNOCENT** COLLEGE FRESHMAN DOING SOME YARD WORK FOR ME!

OR, **OOOO**... YOU COULD BE MY **POOL BOY** WHILE I LOUNGE AROUND THE POOL!


BUT WE DON'T HAVE A POOL...!
THAT DOESN'T MATTER, SILLY! ALL WE NEED IS FOR ME TO GET ONE OF THOSE TEENY, TINY BIKINIS! YOU KNOW, THE KIND THAT BARELY COVERS ANYTHING... ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY'RE WET AND I'M ALL NIPPLY...!


WHEW!
OH MY! IT LOOKS LIKE BIKINI-SHOPPING WILL HAVE TO WAIT! SOMETHING ELSE SEEMS TO HAVE COME UP!


C'MERE, BOBBY! LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT TO DO WITH THAT THING!

YES, MA'AM,
...MRS. VARNEY!

Later that afternoon...

WELL, I BROUGHT UP THE BIG MIRROR WE HAD IN STORAGE AND PUT IT IN THE BEDROOM LIKE YOU ASKED!

THANKS HONEY! IT'S SO NICE HAVING AN EAGER YOUNG MAN AROUND TO HELP OUT WITH CHORES AND... OTHER THINGS!

I THOUGHT YOU NEVER ***LIKED*** THAT MIRROR!. WHY BRING IT BACK UP NOW?

MAYBE I NEVER ***LIKED*** THE WAY I ***LOOKED*** IN THAT MIRROR, BUT THAT'S ***CHANGED!*** OUR LITTLE BATHROOM MIRROR ISN'T ENOUGH TO MAKE SURE I LOOK... ***APPROPRIATE*** FOR YOU! ***YOU*** WANT ME TO LOOK MY ***BEST,*** DON'T YOU?

I WISH **I** LOOKED MY BEST FOR **YOU**, BABY, BUT AT THIS POINT ALL I'M **HOPING** FOR IS TO REVERT TO MY OLD, **SCHLUBBY** SELF! IT'S BEEN **HOURS** NOW! DO **YOU** SEE ANY SIGNS OF ME CHANGING BACK?

I DON'T **THINK** SO, BUT NOW THAT YOU **MENTION** IT, YOUR FACE **DOES** LOOK A BIT **DIFFERENT**! WHY DON'T YOU OPEN YOUR SHIRT SO WE CAN SEE WHAT YOUR **BOD** IS DOING?


SO... ANY CHANGES?
WELL, THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU'VE LOST THAT LANKY TEENAGE BOY FIGURE AND STARTED FILLING OUT AGAIN!

BUT...?

BETTER GO LOOK, HONEY!

WHAT ARE TALKING ABOUT?

IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE STARTING TO FILL OUT IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES! WRONG FOR YOU, AT LEAST!


HOLY SHIT!! ARE THOSE...?!


TITS?! I'M GROWING TITS?!
KINDA LOOKS LIKE IT, HONEY! NOTHING MAJOR, BUT... YEAH, THEY DEFINITELY LOOK LIKE LITTLE TITTIES!


HEY! WATCH THOSE NAILS! IT... IT'S DAMN TENDER THERE!
SORRY, HONEY! I WAS JUST... CURIOUS!


JESUS! WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON? WHAT THE DEVIL AM I GOING TO DO?
THE FIRST THING YOU'RE GOING TO DO IS RELAX, BOB! LIKE YOU SAID, THIS FORMULA IS ONLY TEMPORARY! IT'LL WEAR OFF AND YOU'LL CHANGE BACK!
THIS IS PROBABLY A SIDE EFFECT OF YOU TAKING TOO MUCH TOO SOON! WHAT DO THE DIRECTIONS SAY?


THE... DIRECTIONS?
YEAH, SILLY! THE DIRECTIONS THAT CAME WITH THE FORMULA! WHAT DO THEY SAY ABOUT DOSAGE AND POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS?

UMM... THERE *WERE* NO DIRECTIONS!

NO DIRECTIONS? HOW COULD YOUR COMPANY *POSSIBLY* GIVE YOU THAT FORMULA WITHOUT ANY *INSTRUCTIONS* ON HOW TO *USE* IT?

PROBABLY BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T *GIVE* IT TO ME... I KIND OF *TOOK IT* WITHOUT THEM KNOWING! THEY WERE SENDING SEVERAL BATCHES OUT FOR TESTING AND I... WELL, I SORT OF TOOK ONE!


YOU STOLE IT? OH BOB! WHATEVER POSSESSED YOU TO DO SUCH A THING? I SHOULD...!
WAIT A MINUTE! DID YOU ALSO STEAL THE FORMULA YOU ACCIDENTALLY GAVE ME? AM I IN DANGER OF SOME SIDE EFFECTS, TOO?

NO, HONEY! OF COURSE NOT! I... I VOLUNTEERED TO TEST IT FOR THE COMPANY! IT WAS PERFECTLY SAFE! I WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING TO PUT YOU IN DANGER LIKE THAT!


SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT THE COMPANY KNOWS WE USED THE FIRST FORMULA BUT NOT THIS ONE! BUT THEY DO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO ME... RIGHT?
UMMM... NOT YET! THE DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WAS OUT YESTERDAY, SO I WASN'T ABLE TO FILL HIM IN ON THE DETAILS!


WELL IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A LOT MORE TO TELL HIM AFTER YOU'VE CHANGED BACK!
UH, YEAH! SURE... I'LL TELL HIM EVERYTHING, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT!


OF COURSE IT'S WHAT I WANT! NOT ONLY IS IT THE RIGHT THING TO DO, BUT DON'T YOU THINK THE COMPANY WOULD WANT TO KNOW ABOUT ALL THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS?
YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE! I JUST HOPE I DON'T LOSE MY JOB OVER THIS!


YOU'VE BEEN A VALUED EMPLOYEE AT DM FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS! I'M SURE ONCE YOU EXPLAIN THE SITUATION THEY'LL FULLY UNDERSTAND!
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, CELIA! AND AS SOON AS I CHANGE BACK, I'LL DO THAT VERY THING!

I KNOW YOU WILL, HONEY! THAT'S ONE OF THE MANY REASONS WHY I LOVE AND TRUST YOU!


SORRY, BABY! BUT IF THE COMPANY EVER FOUND OUT I SWIPED BOTH FORMULAS, I'D NOT ONLY LOSE MY JOB, BUT I'D PROBABLY ALSO END UP IN JAIL!

FIRST CHANCE I GET, I'LL MAKE **DAMN** SURE I **COVERED MY TRACKS!** THEN I'LL JUST LET CELIA BELIEVE EVERYTHING'S **OKAY** WITH THE COMPANY!

THAT WAY I'LL **KEEP** MY JOB, STAY **OUT** OF JAIL AND **ENJOY** A STRESS-FREE LIFE WITH MY **HOT, YOUNG WIFE!**


BUT NONE OF THAT WILL HAPPEN UNTIL I LOSE THESE DAMN THINGS AND GET BACK TO NORMAL! IT CAN'T BE MUCH LONGER!

Late evening finally arrives...

YOU'VE BEEN ***MOPING*** IN FRONT OF THE TV ALL DAY! WHY DON'T YOU COME TO BED? I ***PROMISE*** I'LL CHEER YOU UP!

UH, ***LATER,*** HONEY! I'M... I'M JUST NOT ***READY*** YET! THAT'S ALL!

HONEY, DON'T WORRY! YOU'LL CHANGE BACK! IT'S JUST TAKING ***LONGER*** THAN YOU THOUGHT BECAUSE OF THE ***AMOUNT*** YOU TOOK! IT'LL HAPPEN!


REALLY? YOU THINK SO, HUH? BECAUSE NOT ONLY AM I NOT CHANGING BACK, I'M ACTUALLY STILL CHANGING... IN THE WRONG DIRECTION!
STILL? BUT... HOW CAN YOU TELL? YOU REALLY DON'T LOOK THAT DIFFERENT FROM EARLIER!


THERE'S... DIFFERENCES! TAKE MY WORD FOR IT!
BOB, WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER! DON'T KEEP ANYTHING FROM ME! JUST SHOW ME... PLEASE!


WELL... ALL RIGHT! BUT REMEMBER... YOU INSISTED!

THERE! **SEE?** IT'S GETTING **SMALLER!** I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF IT **WORKS** ANYMORE! I JUST **CAN'T**... I MEAN IT WON'T...!


OH HONEY, OF COURSE IT STILL WORKS! YOU'RE JUST HAVING A LITTLE TROUBLE BECAUSE OF ALL THE STRESS YOU'RE UNDER!


WHAT YOU NEED IS SOMEONE TO HELP YOU RELAX... TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THINGS YOU HAVE NO CONTROL OVER! SOMEONE WHO KNOWS WHAT YOU LIKE...!


HOW'S THAT? HMMM... FEELS LIKE IT'S STILL WORKING TO ME!
YEAH, BUT BARELY! IT'S PRACTICALLY NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT IT WAS LAST NIGHT!


HMMM... I HAVE AN IDEA!


GASP! HOLY...!!
OH MY! I THINK WE FOUND JUST THE RIGHT COMBINATION!
JESUS! THAT FEELS SO...! HOW DID YOU KNOW...?

CALL IT A **WILD GUESS**, LOVE! SO, NOW THAT WE'VE GOT **YOU** WORKING JUST FINE, WHY DON'T WE GO DO SOMETHING **CONSTRUCTIVE** WITH IT, SHALL WE?

OOOOOH! AS LONG AS YOU KEEP DOING **THAT**, I'M UP FOR **ANYTHING!**


And "anything" it is, as Bob gets his first glimpse at experiences he never thought possible...

Hours later...

SNORE! HUM?! WHA...? OH CRAP! DAMN BLADDER FEELS LIKE ITS ABOUT TO EXPLODE! WHAT THE HELL TIME IS IT ANYWAY?

SNORT!
5:15 AM... JUST LIKE CLOCKWORK! MUST'VE FINALLY CHANGED BACK TO NORMAL! 'BOUT FREAKIN' TIME!

5:15


OH YEAH! THAT SWEET THING IS ALL MINE!


HMPH! STILL FEELS PRETTY DAMN SMALL, BUT CONSIDERING HOW FREAKIN' HUGE IT GOT AND EVERYTHING CELIA'S PUT IT THROUGH... IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT...!


...THAT...!?

GAAAAA!! WHAT THE HELL?!!

HUH? WHAT? BOB? WHAT IS IT?


HONEY? WHAT'S...? OH MY!!
I DIDN'T CHANGE BACK... NOT AT ALL! I MEAN, LOOK AT ME! I'M PRACTICALLY A... A GIRL!

NOW HONEY, **RELAX!** WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT, BUT **HYSTERICS** WON'T HELP!

THAT'S EASY FOR **YOU** TO SAY! YOU DIDN'T WAKE UP TO A COMPLETE **STRANGER** LOOKING AT YOU IN THE MIRROR!


NO, I WAS WIDE AWAKE WHEN THAT HAPPENED... REMEMBER?
YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT YOU'VE GOTTA ADMIT THIS IS JUST A WEE BIT MORE EXTREME! I MEAN, AT LEAST YOU'RE STILL THE SAME SEX!


WELL, YOU'RE STILL TECHNICALLY MALE, HONEY... IF THAT'S ANY CONSOLATION!
IT'S NOT, BECAUSE WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THAT'LL LAST! WHAT IF I KEEP CHANGING ALL THE WAY? WHAT THEN?

WE DON'T **KNOW** IF THAT WILL HAPPEN, BOB, AND EVEN IF IT **DOES**, WE'LL GET YOU BACK TO NORMAL, SOONER OR LATER! OUR **BEST** COURSE OF ACTION RIGHT NOW IS TO CALM DOWN! **DON'T WORRY!**

I... I GUESS YOU'RE **RIGHT**, CELIA! BUT...!

BUT NOTHING! YOU GO GET CLEANED UP WHILE I FIND YOU SOMETHING TO WEAR!

WELL... OKAY! THANKS!

A little while later...

THIS IS THE BEST YOU COULD FIND FOR ME TO WEAR? SERIOUSLY?!

WELL, THAT TOP IS THE NEXT BEST THING TO A BRA WHICH I'M SURE YOU WOULDN'T WEAR EVEN IF I HAD ONE YOUR SIZE! AND THOSE BOTTOMS ARE LOOSE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR NEW EXPANDED BOTTOM AS WELL AS... WELL, EVERYTHING ELSE DOWN THERE!

I FEEL *RIDICULOUS!*

WELL, UNTIL WE GET YOU SOME CLOTHES OF YOUR OWN, IT'S EITHER *THIS* OR ONE OF MY *NIGHTIES!* TAKE YOUR PICK!

FINE! *YOU WIN!* SO... WHAT DO WE DO *NOW?*


WELL, WE NEED TO LET YOUR COMPANY KNOW ABOUT THIS! THEY'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO WOULD KNOW HOW TO FIX IT!


WHOA! HOLD ON, CELIA! FIRST OFF, REMEMBER THEY DON'T KNOW I TOOK THIS STUFF! THEY MIGHT BE A LITTLE PISSED AT ME AND NO MATTER HOW WELL I EXPLAIN IT, I COULD VERY WELL LOSE MY JOB... OR WORSE!

BUT HONEY... !

AND SECOND, EVEN IF THEY ***DO*** FIX THIS AND I ***DON'T*** GET FIRED, IF I GO IN THERE LOOKING LIKE ***THIS,*** I'LL ***NEVER*** LIVE IT DOWN!

I UNDERSTAND HOW ***CONFUSING*** AND ***EMBARRASSING*** THIS IS FOR YOU, HONEY, BUT WE HAVE TO DO ***SOMETHING!*** WHAT DO ***YOU*** THINK WE SHOULD DO?

AS MUCH AS I ***HATE*** THE WAY I AM, I THINK THE BEST THING IS TO JUST ***WAIT IT OUT!*** THE CHANGES SEEM TO HAVE SLOWED DOWN... MAYBE EVEN ***STOPPED COMPLETELY!*** IN FACT, I'LL BET THAT, IF WE GIVE IT A LITTLE MORE TIME, EVERYTHING WILL START ***REVERSING*** AND I'LL BE BACK TO ***NORMAL!***

BUT WHAT IF IT ***DOESN'T?*** I REALLY THINK THE SOONER WE LET THE ***EXPERTS*** IN ON THIS, THE BETTER! THERE COULD BE ***OTHER*** SIDE EFFECTS WE HAVEN'T EVEN SEEN YET! I'M ***WORRIED,*** BOB! I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO ***HAPPEN*** TO YOU!

HONEY, ***DON'T WORRY!*** THIS STUFF HAS BEEN ***HEAVILY TESTED!*** ALTHOUGH IT OBVIOUSLY STILL HAS SOME ***"BUGS"*** IN IT, THEY WOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO DO EXPERIMENTS ON ***PEOPLE*** IF IT WERE CAPABLE OF DOING ANY ***SERIOUS*** DAMAGE! TRUST ME, THERE'S NO REAL DANGER IN ***WAITING!***

I WISH **I** WERE AS CONFIDENT AS **YOU!**

I JUST HAVE MORE... **FAITH** IN THE COMPANY THAN YOU DO, I GUESS!

TELL YOU WHAT? LET'S GIVE IT **ONE** MORE DAY! IF I'M STILL LIKE THIS... OR **WORSE**... BY TOMORROW MORNING, I'LL MARCH INTO WORK AND HAVE THEM RUN **EVERY TEST THEY'VE GOT** ON ME!

IF YOU'RE REALLY ***SURE!*** BUT I THINK...

LOOK, IF IT'LL HELP TAKE YOUR MIND OFF ALL THIS, WHY DON'T YOU GO ***SHOPPING*** AND FIND ME SOMETHING ***ELSE*** TO WEAR THAT ISN'T SO DAMN... ***FEMININE!***

AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, PICK UP A FEW ***SEXY*** NEW THINGS FOR ***YOURSELF!***


SHOPPING?! BUT BOB...!
LOOK CELIA, I'LL FEEL BETTER KNOWING YOU'RE NOT HANGING AROUND HERE WORRYING AND FUSSING ABOUT ME ALL DAY!


SO, GO CHANGE, GET OUT THERE AND KEEP YOURSELF BUSY! I'LL STAY HERE AND PLAN HOW TO TELL MY BOSS WHAT HAPPENED JUST IN CASE I DON'T CHANGE BACK!
WELL... IF YOU REALLY THINK SO!


WHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE! FOR A MINUTE THERE I THOUGHT CELIA WAS GONNA INSIST I TELL THE COMPANY EVERYTHING! I CAN'T KEEP STALLING HER FOREVER, BUT AT LEAST I BOUGHT MYSELF ONE MORE DAY!

IF THIS **DOESN'T** REVERSE ITSELF, I'VE GOT **TWO** PRIORITIES! **ONE,** FIND SOME WAY OF GETTING THE **ANTIDOTE,** IF THERE **IS** ONE!

AND **TWO,** KEEP CELIA AS **ISOLATED** FROM THE COMPANY AS POSSIBLE!

But not two hours later...

WELL, **HELLO** AGAIN! I'M AFRAID **MR. VARNEY** IS OUT TODAY!

ACTUALLY, I'M HERE TO SEE THE **DIRECTOR** OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT!

UMMM... I DON'T THINK WE **HAVE** A DIRECTOR FOR THAT DEPARTMENT! **ALL** OF OUR R & D PROJECTS REPORT **DIRECTLY** TO THE CEO, **MR. MITCHELL!**

DO YOU HAVE AN **APPOINTMENT?**

OH... WELL THEN, **HE'S** WHO I NEED TO SEE!

NO, I'M AFRAID I **DON'T!**


WELL, IF YOU GIVE ME YOUR NAME, I *MIGHT* BE ABLE TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT SOMETIME *NEXT WEEK!*

MY *NAME?* WELL... IT'S, UH...!

IT'S ALL RIGHT, STACY! I'LL SEE THE YOUNG LADY!


I'M DAVID MITCHELL! AND YOU ARE...!


UM... WE'VE ACTUALLY MET BEFORE, BUT I'M SURE YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME.
REALLY? I'M ***POSITIVE*** I WOULD RECALL IF I'D EVER LAID EYES ON YOU BEFORE.
ER, THE TRUTH IS... I DIDN'T EXACTLY LOOK LIKE THIS THE LAST TIME WE MET.

I'M NOT QUITE SURE I UNDERSTAND.

MY NAME IS CELIA... CELIA ***VARNEY.*** I'M BOB VARNEY'S ***WIFE.***

CELIA VARNEY? I DO RECALL MEETING YOU AT A FEW CHRISTMAS PARTIES. YOU NOW SEEM QUITE... ***DIFFERENT.***

YOU HAVE ***NO IDEA!***


YOU SEE, I'M NOT REALLY AS YOUNG AS I LOOK! I'M... I'M 62 YEARS OLD!
YOU ARE A REMARKABLE 62 YEAR OLD, IF I MAY SAY SO!


WELL, THANK YOU, BUT ITS ALL A RESULT OF ONE OF THE PRODUCTS BOB WAS TESTING FOR YOU! AS YOU CAN SEE, I TOOK IT BY MISTAKE INSTEAD OF BOB!
BY MISTAKE? BOB TOLD YOU HE WAS PLANNING ON TAKING THE F-RHO-DT? THAT'S INTERESTING... AND EXPLAINS SO VERY MUCH!


I'M SORRY, DIDN'T YOU KNOW THAT BOB VOLUNTEERED FOR TESTING THAT AFRO... WHATEVER YOU CALLED IT?
I'M AFRAID THE PAPERWORK JUST HASN'T CAUGHT UP WITH ME YET! SO MANY PROJECTS GOING ON... IT'S HARD TO KEEP TRACK OF IT ALL!
TALES
TALES


I'M DELIGHTED, HOWEVER, TO SEE SUCH WONDERFUL RESULTS! I HOPE YOU'RE BOTH VERY HAPPY WITH THE OUTCOME!
WITH THIS ONE...YES! VERY MUCH! BUT THE MAIN REASON FOR MY VISIT CONCERNS BOB AND... ANOTHER OF YOUR PRODUCTS HE TESTED!


ANOTHER? IT'S HIGHLY UNUSUAL FOR US TO TEST TWO PRODUCTS ON THE SAME INDIVIDUAL! IN FACT, IT'S UNPRECEDENTED! DO YOU KNOW WHICH ONE IT WAS?
I DON'T KNOW THE NAME, BUT IT INITIALLY DID THE SAME FOR HIM THAT IT DID FOR ME! HE WAS YOUNGER, STRONGER... HEALTHIER! IT WAS WONDERFUL!


THAT SOUNDS LIKE ADNS! YOU SAID "INITIALLY"... DID SOMETHING GO WRONG?
I SHOULD SAY SO! HE SEEMS TO BE... WELL, BOB IS STARTING TO TAKE ON... FEMALE CHARACTERISTICS!

FEMALE? FROM ADNS? THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE! JUST HOW "FEMALE" IS HE?

WELL, HE STILL HAS HIS, UH... MALE EQUIPMENT, BUT THE REST OF HIM IS DEFINITELY FEMALE! IT HAS TO BE THE FORMULA.. WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE?

LET ME CHECK WITH RECORDS AND SEE WHAT HE WAS GIVEN! THIS SHOULDN'T TAKE A MOMENT!

UMM... BEFORE YOU DO THAT, THERE'S SOMETHING ***ELSE*** YOU SHOULD KNOW!


YOU SEE, BOB WASN'T "GIVEN" THE FORMULA... HE KIND OF TOOK IT ON HIS OWN WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE HERE ABOUT IT!


YOU MEAN HE STOLE IT?!
YES, BUT IT WASN'T ENTIRELY HIS FAULT!


YOU SEE, AFTER I CHANGED I'M AFRAID MY... BEHAVIOR CAUSED BOB TO FEEL... INADEQUATE, AND IN HIS MIND, UNABLE TO KEEP ME HAPPY!
HE DID WHAT HE DID TO PLEASE ME! IT WAS A TERRIBLE LAPSE OF JUDGMENT, I AGREE, BUT PLEASE UNDERSTAND THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT DROVE HIM TO IT!

AND YET HE SENT **YOU** HERE TO PLEAD HIS CASE INSTEAD OF DOING SO **HIMSELF?**

BOB DOESN'T EVEN **KNOW** I'M HERE! HE WANTED TO **WAIT** AND SEE WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE HE CAME IN! BUT I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE HE GETS HELP AS **SOON** AS POSSIBLE!

HE'S A VERY **LUCKY** MAN TO HAVE SOMEONE LIKE **YOU** STAND UP FOR HIM LIKE THIS!

IF YOU DON'T MIND WAITING HERE FOR AWHILE, I'M GOING TO HAVE A QUICK **CHAT** WITH MY PEOPLE WHO DESIGNED THE FORMULAS AND SEE IF THEY HAVE ANY **SOLUTIONS!**

OH, **THANK YOU,** MR. MITCHELL!

DON'T THANK ME *YET!* I'M ALSO GOING TO SPEAK WITH THE *LEGAL* DEPARTMENT AND *HUMAN RESOURCES!* THERE'S A *DEFINITE* POSSIBILITY YOU MAY NOT *LIKE* WHAT *THEY* RECOMMEND!


THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT? HUMAN RESOURCES?! OH NO! THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT BOB WAS AFRAID OF! WHAT IF HE LOSES HIS JOB? OR GOES TO JAIL?! ALL BECAUSE OF ME?


I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN! SINCE IT'S MY FAULT, I'VE GOT TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SEE THAT BOB GETS THE HELP HE NEEDS WITHOUT BEING PUNISHED!


MR. MITCHELL SEEMS LIKE AN INTELLIGENT, REASONABLE AND FAIR MAN! CONSIDERING BOB'S WORK RECORD, HE MAY JUST LET BYGONES BE BYGONES! BUT IF HE DOESN'T, WELL...


... HE IS A MAN!


SORRY I TOOK SO LONG, MRS. VARNEY!
CALL ME CELIA, PLEASE!


AND BEFORE YOU SAY ANYTHING, PLEASE LET ME SAY AGAIN THAT MY BOB IS A VERY GOOD MAN AND MEANT NO HARM! THIS WAS A ONE-TIME LAPSE IN JUDGMENT ALL BECAUSE OF ME!
ONE ERROR IN A TWENTY-YEAR CAREER SHOULDN'T BE ENOUGH TO RUIN A MAN'S LIFE!
zn-sunny


ISN'T THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO KEEP THAT FROM HAPPENING?

WELL... **CELIA**, SINCE I COULD VERY EASILY SEE **MYSELF** COMMITTING NUMEROUS **INDISCRETIONS** FOR A WOMAN LIKE YOU, I TEND TO **AGREE** WITH YOU!

AND **LEGAL** CONCURS... ALTHOUGH FOR VERY **DIFFERENT** REASONS!


THEY FEEL THAT SINCE IT WAS OUR PRODUCT THAT CAUSED YOUR HUSBAND'S CURRENT CONDITION, REGARDLESS OF HOW HE OBTAINED IT, IT'S IN BOTH OUR BEST INTERESTS TO KEEP HIM ON THE PAYROLL AND DO WHATEVER WE CAN TO SEE HIM THROUGH THIS!

YOU MEAN HE'S **NOT** GOING TO **JAIL** AND HE GETS TO **KEEP HIS JOB?**

THERE ARE A FEW **CONDITIONS**, BUT... IN A NUTSHELL, **YES!**


OH, THANK YOU, MR. MITCHELL! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH THIS MEANS TO ME... TO US!
WELL, I'M GLAD IT PLEASES YOU, CELIA!

AND PLEASE... CALL ME DAVID!

THANK YOU SO MUCH... DAVID!

SO...UMMM, WHAT HAPPENS ***NOW?*** WHAT ***CAN*** YOUR PEOPLE DO FOR BOB?

I'M AFRAID THE NEWS FROM THEM ***ISN'T*** AS POSITIVE! THEY BELIEVE THAT ***WHATEVER*** IT WAS THAT YOUR HUSBAND TOOK ***WASN'T*** WHAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS!

INSTEAD OF THE ***ADNS,*** HE MOST LIKELY TOOK A ***NEWER*** VERSION OF THE ***F-RHO-DT***... THE PRODUCT HE GAVE ***YOU!***

zn-sunny

THE **SAME PRODUCT?** THEN, WILL HE BECOME **COMPLETELY** FEMALE?

IF HE HASN'T ALREADY, THEN PROBABLY **NOT**... UNLESS HE TAKES **MORE,** THAT IS!

THAT'S **NOT** A PROBLEM... BELIEVE ME! SO, HOW DO YOU **UNDO** WHAT'S BEEN DONE TO HIM? IS THERE AN **ANTIDOTE?**

F-RHO-DT WAS DESIGNED TO CREATE **YOUTH** AND **BEAUTY,** SO IT NEVER OCCURRED TO **ANYONE** THAT AN ANTIDOTE WOULD **EVER** BE NEEDED!

THEY **MIGHT** BE ABLE TO PRODUCE **SOMETHING** FOR YOUR HUSBAND'S CONDITION, BUT... IT WILL TAKE **TIME!** WEEKS... **MONTHS...** WE **JUST DON'T KNOW!**

WELL, WHAT DO WE DO UNTIL ***THEN?*** HE CAN'T JUST STAY ***COOPED UP*** IN OUR APARTMENT AS A... WELL, IN ***THAT*** STATE!

WE HAVE SOME ***IDEAS*** I WANT TO RUN BY YOU THAT I THINK WILL BE ***BENEFICIAL*** TO ALL CONCERNED! I ALSO WANT TO FILL YOU IN ON THE ***DETAILS*** OF THE ***F-RHO-DT*** PROJECT... WHAT IT WAS ***ACTUALLY*** DESIGNED FOR!

BUT ***FIRST***, I NEED YOU TO TELL ME ***EVERYTHING*** YOU CAN, STARTING WITH WHAT YOUR HUSBAND TOLD YOU ABOUT THE TEST HE ***"VOLUNTEERED"*** FOR!

Hours later...

WELL, DON'T ***YOU*** LOOK COMFORTABLE! I GUESS HAVING ME OUT OF THE WAY FOR AWHILE WAS THE BEST THING FOR YOU!

HEY, I WOULDN'T PUT IT ***THAT*** WAY, HONEY! I JUST NEEDED A CHANCE TO ***VEG OUT*** FOR AWHILE AND NOT WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING... THAT'S ALL!

Fashion

YOU WERE GONE AN AWFUL LONG TIME FOR JUST ***TWO*** BAGS OF STUFF! IS THAT ALL FOR ME?

NO, I JUST BOUGHT ***ONE*** OUTFIT FOR YOU, THE OTHER IS A NEW DRESS FOR ME!

AND THAT TOOK YOU SIX HOURS?

NOT REALLY! I ACTUALLY SPENT THE FIRST FEW HOURS AT YOUR OFFICE TALKING TO YOUR BOSS, DAVID MITCHELL!

Fashion


YOU DID WHAT?! AFTER EVERYTHING WE DISCUSSED?! MY GOD! WHAT DID YOU TELL HIM?
THE TRUTH! I WANTED YOU TO GET THE HELP YOU NEEDED AND THAT ISN'T POSSIBLE IF THEY DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING!


OH YEAH! LIKE THEY'RE REALLY GOING TO HELP ME AFTER ALL I'VE DONE! JESUS! I'M SCREWED!
THEY ARE GOING TO HELP YOU, BOB! DAVID... MR. MITCHELL PROMISED THEY'D DO WHATEVER THEY COULD TO SEE YOU THROUGH THIS!
OH SURE... WHILE I ROT IN A JAIL CELL!

SIGH! YOU'RE **NOT** GOING TO JAIL AND YOU'RE **NOT** EVEN GOING TO LOSE YOUR JOB! ***I'VE*** TAKEN CARE OF ***EVERYTHING,*** BOB!

I'M NOT ***FIRED?*** THEY'RE NOT PRESSING ***CHARGES?*** HOW... ***HOW*** DID YOU CONVINCE THEM?

IT DOESN'T MATTER! JUST KNOW THAT I WOULD'VE DONE ***ANYTHING*** FOR YOU, HONEY! ***ANYTHING!*** BUT, BECAUSE YOUR MR. MITCHELL IS SO ***UNDERSTANDING***, ALL I NEEDED TO DO WAS TELL HIM THE ***TRUTH!*** AND THAT WAS ***ENOUGH*** FOR HIM!

WAIT A MINUTE! YOU TOLD HIM EVERYTHING ABOUT ME, AND... ABOUT YOU? WHAT DID HE SAY WHEN YOU TOLD HIM ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

HONESTLY, BOB... IF YOU WANT A WORD FOR WORD SUMMARY, I CAN'T GIVE IT TO YOU! I WAS JUST SO HAPPY THAT HE WAS GOING TO HELP YOU, THAT EVERYTHING AFTER THAT WAS KIND OF A BLUR!


SO, HE DIDN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING NEW ABOUT WHAT YOU TOOK? ANYTHING AT ALL?
WHAT ELSE COULD HE TELL ME? YOU TOLD ME PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING ABOUT THAT FORMULA, RIGHT? THE ONE YOU ACCIDENTALLY GAVE ME?


YEAH... OF COURSE! I WAS JUST CURIOUS, THAT'S ALL!
WHY DON'T YOU GO BACK TO YOUR MOVIE? I'VE BEEN IN THESE CLOTHES ALL DAY AND NEED TO SHOWER AND CHANGE!


HOLY CRAP! I DID IT! I GOT AWAY WITH IT!
...

I DON'T KNOW **HOW**, BUT WHO **GIVES A DAMN!** NOW THAT THE **COMPANY'S** ON BOARD, I'LL BE BACK TO MY OLD SELF **IN NO TIME!**

Half a movie later...

BOB, HONEY.. *WAKE UP!* I MADE YOU SOME TEA!


HMMM?
WHAT?
MUST'VE
DOZED OFF!
I SAID, I
MADE YOU
SOME TEA!

WOW! THAT'S SOME DRESS, HONEY! BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO MODEL IT FOR ME RIGHT NOW! I COULD'VE WAITED TILL WE HAD A CHANCE TO GO OUT!

ACTUALLY, I AM GOING OUT... IN JUST A FEW MOMENTS, AS A MATTER OF FACT!

WHAT? OUT? WHERE?

A **COCKTAIL PARTY** DAVID MITCHELL IS GIVING FOR THE **DM BOARD!** HE WAS SO IMPRESSED WITH MY... **OUTCOME,** HE THOUGHT I'D BE AN IDEAL **MODEL** TO PRESENT TO HIS BOARD MEMBERS ON THE BENEFITS OF THE **DM'S** RESEARCH!

CONSIDERING HOW **GENEROUS** HE'S BEEN, I FELT IT BEST TO **ACCEPT** HIS KIND OFFER!


SO LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT! YOU'RE GOING OUT... WITH MY BOSS?
IT'S NOT A DATE! IT'S SIMPLY A FANCY BUSINESS MEETING WHERE ALL I HAVE TO DO IS STAND AROUND AND LOOK FABULOUS! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, HONEY! JUST... TRUST ME!


I DO, HONEY... I DO! AND IF IT HELPS... YOU DO LOOK FABULOUS!
THANKS, LOVE! THAT MEANS A LOT TO ME!


I'M NOT SURE HOW LONG THIS LASTS, SO DON'T WAIT UP FOR ME! BYE, HONEY!

INTERESTING TURN OF EVENTS! NOT ONLY DO I NOT LOSE MY JOB, BUT CELIA GETS A MODELING GIG OUT OF THE DEAL!

WONDER IF IT COULD TURN INTO A PAID GIG?

HMMM... IF CELIA TOLD MITCHELL EVERYTHING SHE KNEW ABOUT HER CHANGE, THEN HE'D KNOW IN A SECOND THAT I STOLE THE F-RHO-DT FORMULA TOO! YET HE STILL DIDN'T BUST ME!


WHY NOT? AND WHY DIDN'T HE TELL CELIA THE TRUTH? IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! SOMETHING FISHY IS GOING ON!
MAYBE I... I'M NOT OUT OF THE WOODS QUITE YET!


Later, at the house of David Mitchell...

I MUST SAY THE BOARD MEMBERS CAN'T HELP BUT BE ***IMPRESSED*** WHEN THEY SEE ***YOU*** IN THAT DRESS! YOU LOOK ***AMAZING,*** CELIA! JUST WHAT WE NEED!

WHY, ***THANK YOU!*** I'M JUST SORRY THAT BECAUSE OF OUR... ***SITUATION***... WE DON'T HAVE A FULL SET OF ***BEFORE*** PICTURES TO SHOW THEM!


OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT! FOR THE TIME BEING, YOUR DRIVERS LICENSE PICTURE WILL BE MORE THAN ENOUGH!
UGH! I ALWAYS HATED THAT PICTURE!


SO... HAVE YOU GIVEN ANY THOUGHT TO THE DISCUSSION WE HAD EARLIER REGARDING YOUR HUSBAND?
YES... I HAVE!

...AND...?

I... DECIDED YOU'RE *RIGHT!*

"AND IT SHOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF BY THE TIME I GET HOME!"































A Tangled Web

Chapter Four

by CBlack

Later that night...

OH MY! IT... IT REALLY WORKED! JUST LIKE DAVID SAID IT WOULD!


HE LOOKS SO... SO FEMININE!


SIGH! OH... WHAT HAVE I DONE?

BOB? HONEY? ARE YOU OKAY?

HMMM... WHATZIT?


YAWN! UH... YEAH! I'M FINE! WHY WOULDN'T I BE? WHAT TIME IS IT ANYWAY?
IT'S 11:30! SO, YOU'VE BEEN ON THE SOFA SINCE I LEFT? HAVEN'T BEEN TO THE BATHROOM OR ANYTHING?

THAT'S A **WEIRD** QUESTION, BUT... NO! I MUST'VE FALLEN ASLEEP SHORTLY AFTER YOU LEFT! DIDN'T WAKE UP 'TIL NOW! **WHY?**

WELL, UMMM... STAY **CALM**, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOU **CHANGED** SOME MORE!


WHAT? YOU SAID CHANGED MORE! NOT CHANGED BACK?! SHIT! I'VE GOTTA SEE!


HOLY CRAP! I'M... I'M...!
YOU'RE VERY CUTE, IF THAT HELPS!


WAIT! WHAT ABOUT...?
IT'S GONE! OH MY GOD... IT'S TOTALLY GONE!


I'M... I'M A...!
WELL... WELCOME TO THE CLUB, HONEY!


WHY THE HELL DID THIS HAPPEN? I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE CHANGING BACK!
WELL, DAVID TOLD ME THAT THEY THINK YOU MIGHT'VE TAKEN SOMETHING BESIDES THE ADNS! SOMETHING MORE LIKE WHAT YOU GAVE ME!


THE F-RHO-DT!? BUT... I WAS YOUNG, STRONG... AND MALE FIRST! HOW COULD IT DO THAT AND THEN THIS?
AND... OH MY GOD... THAT STUFF IS PERMANENT!
NOW, THEY'RE NOT SURE ABOUT THAT! SINCE ALL THE F-RHO-DT PRODUCTS WERE DESIGNED FOR WOMEN EXCLUSIVELY, THEY CAN ONLY GUESS AT THE EFFECTS ON YOU!

WAIT! YOU KNOW THAT THE F-RHO-DT, THE STUFF YOU TOOK, WAS FOR WOMEN ONLY? HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN?

SINCE THIS AFTERNOON! SINCE I WAS ESSENTIALLY THE FACE OF F-RHO-DT FOR THE BOARD MEMBERS TONIGHT, DAVID THOUGHT IT BEST I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT IT!


THEN HE PROBABLY ALSO TOLD YOU...!
THAT YOU DIDN'T "VOLUNTEER" FOR THAT TEST EITHER? YES, BOB... AFTER I TOLD HIM THE STORY YOU TOLD ME!

OH MY GOD, CELIA! I'M **SOOO** SORRY! I...!

STOP RIGHT THERE, BOB! I'VE HAD A **LONG** TIME TO PROCESS ALL THIS AND I CAN **ALMOST** SEE HOW YOU CONVINCED YOURSELF THAT THIS WOULD BE A **GOOD** THING FOR BOTH OF US!

I REALLY **DID**, CELIA! **BELIEVE ME!**

12:15


AND ALTHOUGH I SHOULD BE FURIOUS WITH YOU FOR WHAT YOU DID AND WHAT YOU'VE PUT US THROUGH, THE PRIMARY EMOTION I'M FEELING RIGHT NOW IS DISAPPOINTMENT!
WE'VE BEEN MARRIED FOR ALMOST THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, SO I'M WELL AWARE OF ALL YOUR CHARACTER FLAWS! BUT TO RISK YOUR JOB, NOT TO MENTION OUR HEALTH, ON THESE FORMULAS REALLY SURPRISED ME!


BUT WHAT HURTS MOST IS YOUR INABILITY TO TELL ME THE TRUTH! YOUR LYING HAS ALMOST COMPLETELY RUINED MY TRUST IN YOU!
BUT... YOU'RE STILL HERE! WHY?


BECAUSE, FOR SOME BIZARRE REASON I CAN'T BEGIN TO FATHOM, I STILL LOVE YOU, BOB! AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO ABANDON YOU... ESPECIALLY AT A TIME LIKE THIS WHEN YOU NEED ME THE MOST!


I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!


THEN DON'T SAY ANYTHING! LET'S JUST GO TO BED! I'M EXHAUSTED AND WE HAVE A LONG DAY TOMORROW!

The next day at DM Industries...

MR. MITCHELL WILL SEE YOU NOW!

THANK YOU!

DO WE **REALLY** HAVE TO DO THIS? THIS **BRA** IS **KILLING** ME! COULDN'T WE HAVE JUST **CALLED** HIM? EVERYBODY'S **STARING!** DO YOU THINK THEY **RECOGNIZE** ME?

DON'T BE **RIDICULOUS,** BOB! HOW COULD ANYONE **POSSIBLY** MISTAKE **YOU** FOR AN OVERWEIGHT, MIDDLE-AGED **MAN,** HMM?

AND UNLESS YOU ***REALLY*** WANT EVERYONE TO STARE, YOU DO ***NOT*** WANT TO GO BRALESS, ***TRUST ME!*** THAT ONE WILL DO UNTIL WE GET YOU ***PROPERLY*** FITTED LATER TODAY!

SOMETHING ***ELSE*** TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

AND, **NO**, WE CAN'T JUST **CALL** HIM! I PROMISED DAVID WE'D **BOTH** COME IN TODAY TO DISCUSS PLANS! HE WANTS TO TALK TO YOU **PERSONALLY!**

DAVID, HUH? YOU'RE **ALREADY** ON A FIRST NAME BASIS WITH THE **CEO?** **PRETTY COZY!**


WE'RE ON A FIRST NAME BASIS BECAUSE WE HAVE A COMMON INTEREST... YOU! AND JUST REMEMBER, IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE TIME HE AND I SPENT TOGETHER YESTERDAY, YOU'D BE IN A VERY SORRY STATE RIGHT NOW!


SO DON'T GET BITCHY WITH ME... MISSY!
OUCH!
YES, MA'AM!


CELIA! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
THANK YOU, DAVID! YOU TOO!


AND... MY WORD! IS THAT REALLY YOU, ROBERT?
I'M AFRAID SO, MR. MITCHELL!


AND CAN I SAY THAT I'M REALLY SORRY FOR THE THINGS I DID AND I REALLY APPRECIATE THIS CHANCE TO MAKE IT ALL RIGHT!
THINK NOTHING OF IT, MY DEAR... I MEAN, ROBERT! WHAT'S PAST IS PAST AND ALL THAT MATTERS NOW IS WHERE WE GO FROM HERE!

AND JUST *WHERE* WOULD THAT BE, IF YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING? CELIA SAID SOMETHING ABOUT KEEPING MY *JOB* AND FINDING A *CURE* FOR THIS?

WELL, LIKE I TOLD YOUR WIFE, YOUR SITUATION IS *UNIQUE* TO SAY THE LEAST, SO FINDING A *CURE*, AS YOU CALL IT, WILL TAKE SOME TIME! BUT IN THE *MEANTIME*, I'M FULLY PREPARED TO KEEP YOU ON IN YOUR CURRENT POSITION!


YOU MEAN RIGHT BACK OUT *THERE?* WITH EVERYONE I'VE BEEN WORKING WITH FOR *YEARS?* I... I'M NOT SURE I CAN DO THAT! THEY'LL ALL *KNOW...!*
THEY'LL ALL KNOW *NOTHING!*

ALL ANYONE ***ELSE*** WILL KNOW IS THAT A LOVELY ***YOUNG LADY*** HAS BEEN HIRED TO REPLACE ***ROBERT VARNEY*** WHO HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY ***REASSIGNED!*** WE'LL COME UP WITH A NEW NAME AND BACKGROUND FOR YOU AND ***NO ONE*** WILL BE THE ***WISER!***

I DON'T KNOW...!


IT'S THE PERFECT SOLUTION, HONEY! YOU GET TO KEEP YOUR JOB AND YOU'RE RIGHT HERE CLOSE BY ALL DAY IN CASE THERE ARE ANY BREAKTHROUGHS!

HMMM... WHAT SHOULD WE CALL YOU? *"BOBBI"* IS TOO CUTE AND TOO CLOSE TO "BOB"! *OOO...* HOW ABOUT *"ROBIN"?* IT'S KIND OF LIKE "ROBERT"! WHAT DO *YOU* THINK, HONEY?

"ROBIN"? REALLY?


AND LET ME STRESS THAT ONLY THE THREE OF US WILL KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE! THE PROJECT TEAM WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY YOU AS A NUMBER! ANY INFORMATION THEY NEED WILL COME THROUGH ME, SO I EXPECT THEY'LL NEVER ACTUALLY HAVE TO MEET YOU IN PERSON!
I GUESS WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY...! BUT I STILL...!

YOU'VE GOT TO BE MORE ***OPEN-MINDED*** ABOUT THIS, HONEY! DAVID... ***MR. MITCHELL***, HAS BENT OVER ***BACKWARDS*** TO HELP! CONSIDERING WHAT ***YOU*** DID TO GET TO THIS POINT, I THINK IT BEST WE ***LISTEN*** TO HIM AND TAKE HIS ADVICE... NO MATTER HOW ***UNCOMFORTABLE*** IT MIGHT MAKE ***YOU*** FEEL!

AND BECAUSE OF THE OBVIOUS ***EMOTIONAL*** STRESS OUR PRODUCT HAS PLACED ON YOU, I'LL SEE TO IT THAT YOU'RE "HIRED" AT A PAY GRADE ***HIGHER*** THAN WHAT "BOB" EARNED!

MORE MONEY?!


WELL, SINCE IT SEEMS MY OPTIONS ARE PRETTY LIMITED, AND YOU ARE BEING SURPRISINGLY UNDERSTANDING, I GUESS WE'LL GIVE IT A SHOT! AT LEAST UNTIL THEY COME UP WITH THE ANTIDOTE!
WONDERFUL! I'LL GET THE NECESSARY PAPERWORK UNDERWAY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

CELIA, I'D LIKE A MOMENT TO DISCUSS THE FEEDBACK WE GOT FROM THE BOARD LAST NIGHT! ROBERT, IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND WAITING ***OUTSIDE?*** THIS SHOULD ONLY TAKE A MOMENT OR SO!

OH! UH... ***SURE!***


HMPH! DON'T LET ME GET IN THE WAY OF ANY IMPORTANT BUSINESS!


SO, WHAT DID THE BOARD MEMBERS THINK OF ME?
OH... THEY WERE ***DEFINITELY*** IMPRESSED BY YOU, NO DOUBT! BUT WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT AT A ***LATER*** TIME! I JUST FELT WE NEEDED TO TALK A BIT WITHOUT YOUR ***HUSBAND*** PRESENT!

SO, FROM THE ***LOOKS*** OF THINGS, IT APPEARS EVERYTHING WENT AS ***PLANNED!***

YES, I... I SLIPPED THE ***FORMULA*** INTO HIS TEA BEFORE I LEFT LAST NIGHT AND WHEN I RETURNED, IT WAS ***ALL OVER!***

AND HE ***DOESN'T*** KNOW THAT ***YOU*** DID THIS?

NO! I ***ALMOST*** TOLD HIM, BUT I NEED HIM TO ***TRUST*** ME IF WE'RE GOING TO GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER! THAT'S WHY I TOLD HIM EVERYTHING ***ELSE***... THAT YOU AND I ***KNOW*** HE STOLE ***BOTH*** FORMULAS AND HOW MY "ACCIDENT" WAS ANYTHING ***BUT!***

THAT'S ***GOOD,*** ACTUALLY! NOW THAT HE RECOGNIZES HOW ***FORGIVING*** YOU ARE, HE SHOULD BE MORE ***COMPLIANT*** WITH YOUR WISHES AS YOU HELP HIM ***ADJUST*** TO HIS NEW ***SITUATION!***

I **DO** HOPE SO! I'M STILL FEELING VERY **CONFLICTED** ABOUT SPIKING HIS TEA THAT WAY! AT THE TIME, I WAS **ANGRY** AND **FRUSTRATED,** BUT NOW...!

IT WAS **NECESSARY,** CELIA! LIKE I SAID, ROBERT'S **"INTERMEDIATE"** PHASE WAS EXTREMELY **UNSTABLE!** NUMEROUS **COMPLICATIONS** MIGHT HAVE OCCURRED... POTENTIALLY **FATAL** ONES!

IT'LL BE MUCH **EASIER** FOR US TO FIND AN ANTIDOTE NOW THAT HE'S A **WOMAN.!** HE'LL BE FAR **HEALTHIER** THIS WAY! **MUCH** BETTER OFF!

IF YOU **SAY** SO, DAVID. I JUST HOPE HE **NEVER** FINDS OUT WHAT I'VE DONE!

GOD! HOW AM I GOING TO BE ABLE TO WORK OUT THERE AGAIN LOOKING LIKE THIS?

TO EVERYONE OUT THERE, I'LL BE SOME FRESH-FACED YOUNG KID JUST STARTING OUT, BUT TO ME, THEY'LL STILL BE ALL THE SAME PEOPLE I'VE KNOWN FOR YEARS!

HMMM... I HADN'T THOUGHT OF IT *THAT* WAY!

I'M NOT *SURE* YET, BUT THERE *MIGHT* BE SOME SMALL *POSITIVE* SPIN TO THIS AFTER ALL!

WELL, *HELLO* THERE!

ARE YOU **WAITING** FOR SOMEONE? **ME,** HOPEFULLY!

OH, SHIT! OF **ALL** THE PEOPLE...!

UM... **NO!** JUST FINISHING UP AN **INTERVIEW** AND WAITING FOR MY... MY **FRIEND!**

INTERVIEW? ***EXCELLENT!*** I KNOW FOR A ***FACT*** WE'RE GOING TO BE NEEDING AT LEAST ONE MORE SECRETARY! I COULD DEFINITELY SEE ***YOU*** FITTING THE BILL!

A ***SECRETARY?!*** I'VE BEEN A ***DATA-ANALYST*** FOR ALMOST ***TWENTY...!***

I MEAN... I'M A **DATA-ANALYST, NOT** A SECRETARY!

REALLY? WELL **THAT'S** COOL, TOO! JUST AS LONG AS THEY **HIRE** YOU, RIGHT?


AND THEN WE'LL DEFINITELY GET THE CHANCE TO KNOW EACH OTHER MUCH BETTER! CIAO, BABE!

ARROGANT, SLIME MOLD, PIECE OF...!

HMPH! A LITTLE **BITCHY** AND A TOUCH **DYKEY**, BUT HELL... SHE'S GOT **GREAT TITS!**

READY TO **GO**, HONEY? WE HAVE A **LOT** TO DO THIS MORNING! DAVID THOUGHT IT BEST YOU COME BACK TO WORK THIS AFTERNOON!

THIS AFTERNOON? WHY SO DAMN **SOON?**


WELL, WE BOTH THOUGHT THE SOONER THE BETTER! BESIDES, HE WANTED TO INTRODUCE YOU DURING TODAY'S STAFF MEETING AT THREE!
SIGH! FINE... NO PRESSURE! WHERE TO?


FIRST OFF, WE NEED TO COME UP WITH A LITTLE BACKGROUND FOR "ROBIN" AND SEND IT TO DAVID SO HE CAN SET UP YOUR PERSONNEL FILE!
SO... "ROBIN" IT IS, I GUESS!


THEN WE HAVE SOME SERIOUS SHOPPING TO DO! THIS IS THE ONLY OUTFIT YOU HAVE SO FAR AND IT JUST WON'T DO FOR THE OFFICE!
GREAT... FINE... IS THAT IT?

OH, **HARDLY!** A TRIP TO THE **SALON** IS A **MUST!** THAT HAIR IS A **MESS** AND YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN A LITTLE ABOUT **MAKEUP** AND SUCH!

JESUS! I'M IN **HELL!**

SIGH! ANYTHING **ELSE?**

OH, I'M SURE I'LL THINK OF *SOMETHING* ALONG THE WAY! *GIGGLE!*

GREAT!

That afternoon, at 3 PM...

I CALLED THIS BRIEF MEETING THIS AFTERNOON TO LET YOU ALL IN ON A FEW ***STAFFING CHANGES*** RESULTING FROM A BIT OF CORPORATE REORGANIZATION, AND DON'T WORRY, ***NO ONE*** IS BEING LET GO!

FIRST OFF, **SIMON GREELY** HERE HAS BEEN PROMOTED TO **ASSISTANT VICE-PRESIDENT** IN CHARGE OF DATA-ANALYSIS! HE'S DONE SUCH A GOOD JOB AS PROJECT MANAGER, THAT WE COULDN'T **HELP** BUT NOTICE! **GOOD JOB,** SIMON!

THANKS, MR. M!

NEXT, YOU'VE PROBABLY NOTICED THAT ***BOB VARNEY*** SEEMS TO HAVE GONE ***AWOL*** THIS WEEK, BUT NOTHING COULD BE ***FURTHER*** FROM THE TRUTH! HE'S BEEN ***TEMPORARILY RELOCATED*** TO OUR NEW DIVISION IN ***SINGAPORE*** TO HELP JUMP START OPERATIONS OVER THERE! I'M ***SURE*** HE'LL BE MISSED!

AND **FINALLY,** TO FILL THE VOID LEFT BY BOB'S DEPARTURE, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE **ROBIN GLEASON** WHO COMES TO US FROM **PORTLAND,** WHERE SHE WORKED FOR SEVERAL YEARS AS A **TOP-NOTCH** DATA-ANALYST! I HOPE YOU ALL WILL JOIN ME IN MAKING HER FEEL VERY **WELCOME** HERE!

UMM... **HI!**

WELL, THAT'S ALL *I* HAVE! ENJOY THE REST OF YOUR DAY! AND *MAEVE?*

YES, MR. MITCHELL?

COULD YOU SHOW *ROBIN* TO THE STATION NEXT TO YOURS AND GET HER *SITUATED?*

OF *COURSE*, MR. MITCHELL!


WELCOME, ROBIN! I KNOW I'M DEFINITELY LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING MUCH MORE OF YOU!


C'MON ROBIN! IT'S RIGHT OVER HERE!


SO, SIMON ALREADY HITTING ON YOU?
YEAH! ANYONE EVER COMPLAIN ABOUT THAT?

NOT REALLY! HE'S A RISING **STAR** IN THE COMPANY, AFTER ALL. BUT DON'T WORRY! THE GUY'S **ALL TALK!** HE'LL GO AWAY IF YOU DON'T ENCOURAGE HIM! AT LEAST **THAT'S** WHAT'S WORKED FOR **ME!**

BUT HE SEEMS AWFULLY **PERSISTENT** TO ME!

I THINK HE'S JUST IN A PARTICULARLY ***FEISTY*** MOOD BECAUSE OF HIS PROMOTION! JUST TREAT HIM ***COOLY*** AND HE'LL LOST INTEREST... ***EVENTUALLY!***

I SURE ***HOPE*** SO!


WELL, HERE WE ARE! IT LOOKS LIKE THEY ALREADY SET YOU UP, SO YOU'RE READY TO LOGIN AND ROCK AND ROLL! IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, I'M RIGHT NEXT DOOR!
THANKS, MAEVE!


WELL, LET'S SEE WHAT I'VE MISSED THE LAST FEW DAYS!
zn-sunny


HMPH! DOESN'T SURPRISE ME THEY'VE GOT "ROBIN" WORKING THE LOW-PRIORITY STUFF! DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S MITCHELL'S DOING OR JUST S.O.P. FOR THE NEWBIE!
EITHER WAY, I STILL KNOW HOW TO FIND WHAT I NEED WHEN THE TIME COMES!


BUT FOR NOW, I'LL JUST PLAY IT COOL AND BLEND INTO THE BACKGROUND... JUST LIKE ALWAYS!

Five o'clock rolls around...

HEY ROBIN, *QUITTING TIME!* WANT TO GO GRAB A DRINK?

UMMM, A *DRINK?* WELL, I DON'T KNOW...!


YOU DON'T HAVE A HUSBAND... OR KIDS WAITING FOR YOU AT HOME, DO YOU?
GIGGLE! OH GOD, NO! NO WAY!
THEN C'MON! ONE DRINK! IT'S RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER AND I'M BUYING!


WELL... OKAY! BUT JUST ONE!
THAT'S MY GIRL! I KNEW WE WERE GOING TO GET ALONG!

A few minutes later, right around the corner...

SO, HOW WAS YOUR FIRST ***QUARTER*** DAY? EVERYTHING YOU ***DREAMED*** IT WOULD BE?

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I REALLY HAD ***NO IDEA*** WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN I SHOWED UP TODAY! BUT IT ALL WENT PRETTY ***SMOOTHLY,*** THANKS IN LARGE PART TO ***YOU!***


WELL, AS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE NOTICED YET, OUR DIVISION AT DM IS RATHER... TESTOSTERONE HEAVY! SO WE FEW GIRLS NEED TO STICK TOGETHER!


HI SAL! GIVE US TWO MARGARITAS, WILL YOU?
YOU GOT IT, MAEVE!
WHY DO I GET THE FEELING YOU'VE BEEN HERE MORE THAN JUST A FEW TIMES?

WHAT CAN I SAY? IT'S NICE AND **CONVENIENT** FOR OUR REGULAR LADIES' POST-WORK **DETOX SESSIONS!** BESIDES, THEY HAVE **DYNAMITE** MARGARITAS AND THE **SCENERY'S** NOT TOO **SHABBY** EITHER!

YOU KEEP SAYING **"LADIES!"** I DON'T RECOGNIZE ANYONE ELSE HERE FROM **DM!**


HEY MAEVE! SORRY I'M LATE! LAST MINUTE GARBAGE TO DEAL WITH... AS USUAL!
STACY?!

I HAD NO IDEA *YOU* TWO WERE *FRIENDS!* I MEAN...!

YOU MEAN YOU *COULDN'T* FIGURE IT OUT AFTER WORKING HERE *TWO WHOLE HOURS?* GEEZ ROBIN, YOU WEAR *BLINDERS* OR SOMETHING?


EXPLAIN IT TO HER, STACY! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
EXPLAIN WHAT?


MAEVE AND I HAVE BEEN FRIENDS FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS, BUT DECIDED TO KEEP IT OUT OF THE OFFICE! KNOWING THE GUYS AT THE OFFICE, THEY'D PROBABLY READ A LOT MORE INTO IT THAN THERE REALLY IS!
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE GOING ON? I MEAN, YOU ARE KEEPING IT A SECRET! WHY?

JESUS! YOU SOUND JUST LIKE ONE OF THEM!

SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING BY IT!

LOOK! OFFICE POLITICS IS A WEIRD THING! IF THE GUYS PERCEIVE US SIMPLY AS INDIVIDUAL "GIRLS," WE'RE NO THREAT! JUST EYE-CANDY THAT PRETTIES UP THE PLACE!

IF THEY KNEW WE HUNG OUT TOGETHER, TALKED, COMPARED NOTES AND SUCH, THEN THEY'D START FEELING ***THREATENED***... AS WELL THEY ***SHOULD!***

WOW! IT ALMOST SOUNDS LIKE A FEMALE UNDERGROUND! ***COOL!***


IT'S NOT AS UNUSUAL AS IT MAY SOUND... TRUST ME!
SO, WHAT'D I MISS?


WOW, MAEVE! LOOK AT YOU!
YEAH WELL, I LEARNED A LONG TIME AGO THAT WHEN YOU HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS WHO LOOK LIKE THIS, YOU NEED TO MAKE SOME ADJUSTMENTS TO AVOID BEING COMPLETELY INVISIBLE!

HMMM, AND IF ***YOU*** START HANGING WITH US REGULARLY, I MAY HAVE TO ***DOUBLE*** MY EFFORTS! IT'S TOUGH TO COMPETE WITH ***TWO*** RACKS LIKE THAT!


SO, ROBIN... I'VE GOT A QUESTION FOR YOU! THAT HOT BLONDE THAT CAME WITH YOU TO MEET MR. MITCHELL THIS MORNING... WHAT'S HER STORY?
UMMM, WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WELL, SHE **FIRST** SHOWS UP A COUPLE DAYS AGO ASKING FOR **BOB VARNEY!** SINCE THEN SHE'S MET WITH MITCHELL **TWICE...** ONCE YESTERDAY BY HERSELF WITH **NO APPOINTMENT** AND THEN THIS MORNING WITH **YOU!** SO... **WHAT'S UP?**

OH **SHIT!** THINK **FAST** VARNEY!

UMMM... SHE **NEVER** GAVE YOU HER **NAME?**


NO, SHE NEVER GAVE IT TO ME! MR. MITCHELL JUST SAID HE HAD AN APPOINTMENT THIS MORNING WITH TWO YOUNG WOMEN... NOTHING ELSE!
HERE GOES...!

OH WELL... THAT'S **ANNIE MCCLURE!** SHE'S AN OLD **COLLEGE** FRIEND! WHEN I DECIDED TO MOVE BACK FROM PORTLAND, SHE LET ME MOVE INTO HER SPARE BEDROOM, SO WE'RE **ROOMMATES** NOW! SHE ALSO KNOWS **BOB VARNEY** AND STOPPED INTO THE OFFICE THE OTHER DAY TO PUT IN A GOOD WORD FOR ME! BOB TOLD HER SHE NEEDED TO TALK TO **MITCHELL!** SOMEHOW, SHE MANAGED TO PULL THAT OFF, AND THAT'S HOW **I** GOT AN INTERVIEW!

YOU COULD SAY THAT **ANNIE MCCLURE** IS THE REASON **I'M** HERE!

HMMM... THAT'S ***QUITE*** A FRIEND YOU GOT THERE! LUCKY FOR ***YOU*** MITCHELL HAS A ***WEAKNESS*** FOR YOUNG BLONDES!

HE... HE ***DOES?***

OH ***YEAH!*** THE LAST THREE ***EX***-MRS. MITCHELLS LOOKED A ***LOT*** LIKE YOUR FRIEND! IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE ***PRE-NUPS***, HE'D BE TOTALLY ***BROKE*** BY NOW!

THREE EX-WIVES? ALL SEXY, YOUNG BLONDES LIKE CEL... I MEAN ANNIE?

OH YEAH! HE DEFINITELY HAS A FAVORITE "TYPE", THAT'S FOR SURE! NOT TO TAKE ANYTHING AWAY FROM YOUR FRIEND, BUT I DOUBT SHE HAD TO TRY VERY HARD BEFORE SHE HAD HIM WRAPPED AROUND HER LITTLE FINGER!

HEY, IF SHE PLAYS HER CARDS RIGHT, YOU COULD BE CLOSE FRIENDS WITH THE CEO'S NEXT WIFE! HOW COOL WOULD THAT BE?


I... I'M SUDDENLY NOT FEELING VERY WELL! I THINK I NEED TO GO!
YEAH, I SHOULD'VE WARNED YOU... SAL REALLY LIKES TO LOAD UP HIS MARGARITAS! YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE, THOUGH! WE'LL GET SOMETHING TO EAT... THAT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER!

I'D REALLY LIKE TO... *I MEAN IT!* IT'S JUST... I HAVE A LOT OF *UNPACKING* STILL TO DO... NEW APARTMENT AND ALL! AND IT'S BEEN A *REALLY* LONG DAY! CAN I TAKE A *RAIN CHECK?*

YOU BET!

ANYTIME!


ALL RIGHT THEN, I'LL SEE YOU TWO TOMORROW! AND THANKS AGAIN!


SO IS THAT WHY MITCHELL IS BEING SO UNDERSTANDING AND HELPFUL? HE HAS THE HOTS FOR MY WIFE? BUT.. SHE'S MARRIED... TO ME! HE KNOWS THAT!
MAYBE... MAYBE I'M JUST BEING PARANOID!

WHATEVER THE CASE, I THINK I'LL SPEND SOME TIME TOMORROW DOING A LITTLE... RESEARCH!

A short while later, back at the apartment...

HONEY, IS THAT YOU?

YEAH, IT'S ME!


SO... HOW'D IT GO? HOW WAS "ROBIN'S" FIRST DAY?
CONSIDERING IT ONLY LASTED A FEW HOURS, IT WENT SURPRISINGLY WELL!

I *TOLD* YOU IT WOULD!

YEAH, YOU *ALSO* TOLD ME I'D GET USED TO THESE *SHOES!* YOU'RE ONE FOR TWO, HONEY!

BE *PATIENT,* BOB! THEY LOOK *GREAT* ON YOU! *HUNGRY?*


STARVING! BUT I HAVE TO GET OUT OF THESE THINGS FIRST!
OKAY, I'LL HAVE DINNER READY IN A MINUTE!

SHOULD I **TELL** HER ABOUT **MITCHELL** AND HIS **THREE EX-WIVES?** HELL, SHE'LL **PROBABLY** LAUGH IT OFF AS **COINCIDENCE**... AND IT PROBABLY **IS!**

....


BUT WHAT IF HE DOES HAVE THE HOTS FOR HER AND STARTS HITTING ON HER? SHE MIGHT FEEL OBLIGATED TO HIM FOR NOT PRESSING CHARGES!


OR WHAT IF IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF OBLIGATION, BUT BECAUSE OF HER NEEDS! NEEDS THAT I OBVIOUSLY CAN'T...!


STOP IT, VARNEY! BEFORE YOU MAKE YOURSELF CRAZY!

After a subdued dinner...

YOU WERE AWFULLY ***QUIET*** DURING DINNER, HONEY! IS EVERYTHING ***OKAY?***

YEAH, I'M JUST, UH... *TIRED!* A LONG, *WEIRD* DAY, YOU KNOW!

MENTAL PICTURES OF *YOU* AND *MITCHELL TOGETHER* AREN'T *HELPING* EITHER!


POOR THING! YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS! YOU HAVEN'T EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW THIS NEW BODY OF YOURS, HAVE YOU!
UMM, NO... NO I HAVEN'T! I HAVEN'T REALLY GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT!


HMMM! WELL, LET'S INTRODUCE YOU, SHALL WE?
WHAT? YOU MEAN RIGHT NOW? LOOK CELIA, I DON'T KNOW IF I'M...!


NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME, HONEY! YOU'VE JUST GONE THROUGH SOME EXTREME AND CONFUSING CHANGES AND WHETHER YOU WANT TO ADMIT IT OR NOT, YOU NEED TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE FACT THAT FOR THE TIME BEING... YOU'RE A WOMAN!

NO DUH!

WHAT I *MEAN* IS, THE MORE *COMFORTABLE* YOU ARE WITH YOURSELF, THE *EASIER* ALL THIS WILL BE FOR YOU!

AND THE ***FIRST*** STEP IS TO LEARN WHAT IT'S LIKE TO ***FEEL*** LIKE A WOMAN! ALL THE ***SENSATIONS*** THAT ARE ***UNIQUELY FEMALE!***


OHHH! THAT FEELS EVEN BETTER THAN LAST TIME!


I THOUGHT IT MIGHT! AND I'LL BET I CAN TOP THIS!
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, BUT I DON'T THINK I'M READY FOR...!


OH MY GOD! IS IT SUPPOSED TO BE THAT... SENSITIVE?


MMM-HMMM! WANT ME TO STOP?
OH HELL NO! GOD, IF IT FEELS THIS GOOD, WHY THE HELL DIDN'T YOU HAVE ME DOING THIS TO YOU EVERY NIGHT?


WELL, YOU DID DO IT EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, BUT... LET'S JUST SAY I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN MY BODY A LITTLE BETTER THAN YOU HAVE!


HMMM... NOW YOU'VE GOT ME MORE THAN A LITTLE CURIOUS ABOUT ALL THE THINGS YOU REALLY KNOW!


WELL, JUST FOLLOW ME TO THE BEDROOM, LOVE, AND I'LL SATISFY THAT CURIOSITY OF YOURS! I PROMISE!


Hours pass...


And "Robin's" curiosity is piqued and sated... repeatedly...


And before they both finally succumb to exhaustion,
Robin learns that being a woman isn't all bad...

In fact, there are some very definite perks...



A Tangled Web

Chapter Five

by CBlack

The next morning...

C'MON HONEY! YOU DON'T WANT TO BE LATE FOR YOUR FIRST *FULL* DAY OF WORK, DO YOU?

I'M COMING, *I'M* COMING!


YOU KNOW DAMN WELL THAT IT'S NOT MY FAULT IF I'M LATE!
TRUE! BUT I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE I SENT YOU OFF WITH A SMILE ON YOUR FACE THIS MORNING! YOU WEREN'T COMPLAINING THEN!

AND I'M NOT NOW! I'M JUST ***SORRY*** WE RAN OUT OF TIME BEFORE I HAD A CHANCE TO ***RETURN THE FAVOR!***

OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT ***ME!*** I HAVE WAYS OF... ***MAKING DO!*** IT MAY NOT BE AS GOOD AS THE ***REAL THING,*** BUT... IT'LL DO ***FOR NOW!***

AND WHAT'S WITH THE **SLACKS** AGAIN? I THOUGHT WE DECIDED ON A **SKIRT** TODAY! YOU DEFINITELY HAVE THE **LEGS** FOR IT!

JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN MAKE ME **SQUEAL** LIKE A GIRL DOESN'T MEAN I'M GOING TO GO CRAZY **DRESSING** LIKE ONE!

I'LL SEE YOU TONIGHT! WISH ME LUCK!

GOOD LUCK, LOVE! AND HAVE A GOOD DAY!

Later that morning...

UGH! I'D FORGOTTEN HOW MUCH LOW PRIORITY JUNK THEY MAKE THE NEWBIES DEAL WITH! THIS STUFF IS MIND-NUMBING!


YOUR AVERAGE NEWBIE WOULD TAKE A COUPLE OF DAYS TO GET THROUGH ALL THIS GARBAGE, BUT SINCE I'M NOT YOUR AVERAGE NEWBIE...!


DONE! AND MY TIMING COULDN'T BE BETTER! I CAN USE MY LUNCH HOUR TO DO A LITTLE SNOOPING WITHOUT ANYONE ELSE AROUND!
HEY ROBIN! WANT TO GO GRAB SOME LUNCH?


UMMM... NO THANKS! I'M STILL GETTING UP TO SPEED ON EVERYTHING AND WANT TO KEEP AT IT! YOU GO AHEAD!


OKAY... BROWN-NOSE! SEE YOU LATER FOR DRINKS?
YOU'RE ON!


ALL RIGHT! LET'S SEE IF "CARL" KNOWS ANYTHING NEW ABOUT THE F-RHO-DT PROJECT...!
zn-sunny

HMMM... **THAT'S** STRANGE! NOTHING NEW AT ALL! IN FACT, THERE'S NO **NEW** CORRESPONDANCE HERE **AT ALL** SINCE...!

zn-sunny

HOLY CRAP! WHAT THE HELL IS THIS? IT NEVER DID THIS BEFORE!

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zn~sunny


I THINK NOW WOULD BE A REALLY GOOD TIME TO CATCH UP WITH MAEVE, BEFORE...!


ROBIN?!
SHIT! NOT FAST ENOUGH!
YES, MR. MITCHELL?


CAN I SEE YOU IN MY OFFICE?
YES, MR. MITCHELL!


I THINK YOU KNOW WHY I CALLED YOU IN HERE, ROBIN!
YES, I... I THINK I DO, MR. MITCHELL! THAT SECURITY MESSAGE JUST POPPED UP ON MY COMPUTER! I'M NOT SURE WHY IT DID THAT, I...!

COME NOW, ROBIN! IF YOU TRULY WERE A ***NEW*** HIRE, I ***MIGHT*** BELIEVE YOU, BUT WE ***BOTH*** KNOW BETTER, ***DON'T WE?***

WE'VE BEEN ***MONITORING*** CARL'S ACCOUNT EVER SINCE YOU ***"BORROWED"*** HIS LOGIN LAST WEEK TO OBTAIN THE FORMULAS! WHAT WERE HOPING TO FIND ***THIS TIME?***

zn-sunny


I WASN'T TRYING TO TAKE ANYTHING, I SWEAR! I WAS JUST ANXIOUS TO SEE IF THERE WERE ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING MY SITUATION! THAT'S ALL... I PROMISE!


IF THIS WERE THE *FIRST* TIME IT HAPPENED, I MIGHT BE INCLINED TO BELIEVE YOU, *ROBIN!* BUT *THREE* TIMES?
I... I TAKE IT I'M *FIRED* THEN!

IF THIS HAD BEEN REPORTED TO SECURITY... ***UNDOUBTEDLY!*** HOWEVER, SINCE ***I*** CAUGHT YOUR LITTLE ***"INDISCRETION"*** BEFORE ***THEY*** DID, YOUR TERMINATION ISN'T A ***DONE DEAL!***

YOU MEAN, YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME ***ANOTHER*** CHANCE?

UNIQUE SITUATIONS LIKE **YOURS**, ROBIN, REQUIRE **UNIQUE SOLUTIONS!** AS A **FAVOR** TO YOU **AND** YOUR WIFE, I'M **NOT** GOING TO FIRE YOU!

OH, **THANK YOU**, MR. MITCHELL! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS **MEANS** TO ME! I'LL JUST GET **RIGHT BACK** TO WORK AND YOU **WON'T** HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT A **THING** FROM ME **EVER AGAIN!** **I PROMISE!**

THAT **WON'T** BE NECESSARY, ROBIN! YOU SEE, ALTHOUGH I'M NOT **FIRING** YOU, YOU'VE DEMONSTRATED THAT YOU **CAN'T BE TRUSTED** IN DATA OPERATIONS! SO I'M GOING TO **REASSIGN** YOU!

I WANT YOU TO GO HOME FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY AND CONSIDER HOW ***FORTUNATE*** YOU ARE TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN THIS ***THIRD*** OPPORTUNITY TO ***REDEEM*** YOURSELF!

BUT REST ASSURED, ROBIN... THERE WILL ***NOT*** BE A ***FOURTH!***

I UNDERSTAND, MR. MITCHELL! ***I REALLY DO!***

STOP BY **HUMAN RESOURCES** FIRST THING TOMORROW AND THEY'LL GIVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR **NEW POSITION!**

GOOD DAY, **ROBIN!**

YES, MR. MITCHELL! **THANK YOU AGAIN!**

JESUS! I MUST'VE DONE SOMETHING RIGHT IN A PREVIOUS LIFE TO BE SO DAMN LUCKY IN THIS ONE!

BUT LIKE HE SAID, THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE! NO MORE SHORT CUTS! JUST DO MY JOB, WHATEVER IT TURNS OUT TO BE, AND BE A GOOD GIR...!


SIGH! AND JUST BE A GOOD GIRL!


HELLO, CELIA? IT'S DAVID...!
WE HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT WE NEED TO DISCUSS...!

A short time later...

CELIA! I'M SO GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT HERE SO QUICKLY!


WELL, YOU SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT, SO I RUSHED RIGHT OVER! BY THE WAY, I DIDN'T SEE BOB OUT FRONT! IS EVERYTHING OKAY?

ACTUALLY, **ROBIN** IS THE REASON I CALLED YOU HERE! I'M AFRAID A **SITUATION** HAS DEVELOPED AND I HAD TO **RELIEVE** ROBIN OF HER POSITION!

WHAT?! FIRED?! OH MY LORD, **WHAT HAPPENED?**

WELL, IT SEEMS **ROBIN** WAS UP TO HER **OLD TRICKS** AGAIN **HACKING** INTO THE SYSTEM THE WAY SHE DID WHEN SHE **STOLE** THOSE FORMULAS FROM US FOR HER OWN **PERSONAL** USE!


AGAIN?! BUT... BUT WHY? WHY WOULD HE... SHE DO THIS AGAIN?
YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS OURS! WE CAN ONLY HOPE IT WAS MERELY A LACK OF GOOD JUDGMENT AND NOT SOMETHING MORE... UNETHICAL!

I... I CAN'T **BELIEVE** SHE DID THIS! AFTER **EVERYTHING** YOU'VE DONE FOR HER... FOR **US!** YOU'D **ALREADY** GIVEN HER A **SECOND CHANCE** AND I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR NOT CONSIDERING A **THIRD CHANCE** FOR HER!

IT WOULD BE ASKING **WAY** TOO MUCH UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES!

WELL, ROBIN'S SITUATION **IS** UNIQUE AND DESERVES SOME RATHER **UNIQUE CONSIDERATIONS!** IF **WE** PUT OUR HEADS **TOGETHER...!**


YOU WOULD DO THAT, DAVID? EVEN AFTER SHE VIOLATED YOUR TRUST LIKE THAT?
THE WAY I SEE IT, SHE'S VIOLATED YOUR TRUST AS WELL! BUT AFTER FURTHER THOUGHT, ABANDONING HER MAY NOT BE THE BEST SOLUTION!

YOU'RE **RIGHT**, OF COURSE! SHE LIED TO **BOTH** OF US! BUT... IT'S NOT **LIKE** HIM, THE **BOB** I MARRIED, TO BE SO **DECEITFUL!** COULD IT BE THE **FORMULA?** MAYBE IT DID SOMETHING TO HIS **MIND** AS WELL!


I WISH THAT WERE THE CASE! IT WOULD EXPLAIN HER BEHAVIOR, BUT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING IN EITHER OF THE FORMULAS THAT DIRECTLY AFFECTS THE MIND OF THE USER!
I WISH I COULD BE SO SURE!


THEN LET ME PROVE IT TO YOU!


DAVID? WHAT ARE YOU DOING? THAT ISN'T...!

THE ADNS? YES... THE FORMULA THAT YOUR HUSBAND TRIED TO STEAL THE SECOND TIME!

BUT WHY, DAVID?

YOU, CELIA ARE PROOF OF THE SAFETY OF THE F-RHO-DT AND AS FAR AS THE ADNS, WELL... I'M RELUCTANT TO ADMIT IT, BUT I TAKE IT REGULARLY!


WEEKENDS, SOME EVENINGS, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME EVER HERE AT THE OFFICE!

THE POINT IS I WANTED TO ***PROVE*** TO YOU HOW ***SAFE*** THESE FORMULAS ARE!


NOW THAT I *THINK* ABOUT IT, YOU'RE RIGHT, DAVID! I JUST *DESPERATELY* WANTED TO BELIEVE SOMETHING *ELSE* WAS CAUSING BOB'S *DEPLORABLE* BEHAVIOR!

I KNOW IT'S ***DIFFICULT*** WHEN A LOVED ONE TURNS OUT TO BE ***LESS*** THAN WE EXPECTED!

UMMM... IF YOU'LL **EXCUSE** ME FOR A MOMENT, CELIA! THIS SUIT WASN'T **TAILORED** TO FIT **THIS** PARTICULAR PHYSIQUE!

SINCE I'M GOING TO BE LIKE THIS FOR A FEW HOURS, I'D LIKE TO GO **CHANGE** INTO SOMETHING THAT FITS A LITTLE **BETTER!**


PLEASE WAIT HERE! I WON'T BE A MINUTE!
OF... OF COURSE! I'LL BE RIGHT HERE!

I CAN'T ***BELIEVE*** BOB DID THIS ***AGAIN!*** HE ***SWORE*** TO ME THAT THERE WOULD BE NO MORE LIES AND NO MORE ***DECEIT!*** YET AS SOON AS HE GETS A CHANCE, HE ***THROWS*** ALL THAT RIGHT OUT THE WINDOW!

I... I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN ***EVER*** TRUST HIM AGAIN!

THANK GOD FOR **DAVID!** IF HE WEREN'T SO SUPPORTIVE AND **UNDERSTANDING,** I... I DON'T KNOW **WHAT** I'D DO!

IT LOOKS LIKE THE **ONLY** WAY WE CAN KEEP BOB FROM TOTALLY **SELF-DESTRUCTING** IS TO KEEP WORKING **TOGETHER!**

zn-sunny

I HOPE I DIDN'T TAKE TOO LONG!

NO... NOT AT ALL!

WOW! I MEAN...!


FORGIVE ME, DAVID! I'M JUST AMAZED AT WHAT THAT FORMULA CAN DO! I GUESS IT'S A GOOD THING YOU HAD A CHANGE OF CLOTHES BACK THERE! I DON'T THINK YOUR SUIT COULD'VE HANDLED ALL... THIS!


WELL, TO BE TRUTHFUL, I HAD A BAG PACKED FOR AN... APPOINTMENT I HAD SCHEDULED FOR THIS AFTERNOON!


OH! I... I SEE! YOU OBVIOUSLY HAD PLANS THAT I'M INTERFERING WITH!


WELL, DON'T WORRY! WE CAN DO THIS ANOTHER TIME, DAVID!
PLANS THAT I CANCELED IMMEDIATELY AFTER CALLING YOU HERE, CELIA! THIS MEANS MUCH MORE TO ME, BELIEVE ME!

I... I **DO**, DAVID! I'M **SORRY** FOR JUMPING TO **CONCLUSIONS** LIKE THAT! I GUESS I'M JUST A LITTLE... **FLUSTERED** BY EVERYTHING RIGHT NOW!

I UNDERSTAND **COMPLETELY**, CELIA! YOU'VE BEEN PUT THROUGH MORE THAN ANY WOMAN COULD **POSSIBLY** IMAGINE!

THE *REMARKABLE*, YET *UNSOLICITED*, CHANGES YOUR *BODY* WENT THROUGH AND THEN DISCOVERING IT WAS *ALL* DUE TO YOUR *HUSBAND'S DECEPTION!*

AND HIS *CONTINUED* DECEPTIONS ROBBED HIM OF HIS *MANHOOD* AND SADDLED *YOU* WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DEALING WITH *HIS* CHANGES AS WELL!

WELL, IT HASN'T *ALL* BEEN BAD!


MAYBE NOT! BUT WHAT IF I HAD NO CHOICE AND HAD TO FIRE ROBIN! CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES, SHE'D MOST LIKELY FORFEIT HER COMPANY PENSION AS WELL!
WHERE WOULD THAT LEAVE YOU? AND WHY DIDN'T THIS OCCUR TO HER BEFORE SHE DECIDED TO RISK IT ALL?
I... I DON'T KNOW! IT'S ALMOST LIKE I'M MARRIED TO A COMPLETE STRANGER!

I CAN ONLY **IMAGINE** THE TOLL THIS IS TAKING ON YOU **EMOTIONALLY!** BESIDES ALL THE **STRESS** CAUSED BY YOUR **HUSBAND,** YOU'RE ALSO A YOUNG, VIBRANT AND **SENSUAL** WOMAN WHO HAS ESSENTIALLY BEEN **ABANDONED** BY HER HUSBAND!

THE STRONG, **CARING** PERSON YOU **NEED** TO TURN TO... TO **SUSTAIN** YOU... TO FULFILL YOUR **NEEDS**... IS NO LONGER THERE FOR **YOU!**

HE... HE ISN'T, **IS** HE?


BUT I DON'T WANT YOU TO FEEL ALONE THROUGH THIS, CELIA! I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT YOU CAN TURN TO ME FOR ANYTHING! GUIDANCE, FRIENDSHIP... WHATEVER YOU NEED...!
I... I APPRECIATE THAT, DAVID! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH!


AND I...
I...!



















At that very moment, back at the apartment...

CELIA? YOU HERE, HONEY?


CELIA?


PHEW! SHE'S NOT HERE! NOW I DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN WHY I'M HOME IN THE MIDDLE OF THE AFTERNOON AND IT GIVES ME MORE TIME TO DECIDE WHAT, OR IF I TELL HER ABOUT WORK!


HELL, I CAN'T KEEP THIS FROM HER! SHE'S BOUND TO FIND OUT EVENTUALLY! I GUESS IT'S BEST SHE HEARD IT FROM ME!


CONSIDERING THE DAY I'VE HAD, I WAS REALLY HOPING FOR MORE OF THAT "ONE-ON-ONE" TIME CELIA INTRODUCED ME TO LAST NIGHT!
WHEW! IF I'VE GOT STAY A WOMAN FOR AWHILE, THAT IS DEFINITELY SOMETHING I NEED TO PARTAKE OF... AND OFTEN!


HMMM... JUST BECAUSE SHE'S NOT HERE DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T DO A LITTLE SELF-EXPLORATION! SHE DID SAY I NEEDED TO GET TO KNOW MY BODY!


MMMM... NOT QUITE AS GOOD AS WHEN SHE DOES IT, BUT DEFINITELY NICE!


OOOOO! THAT'S AMAZING! MY COCK NEVER FELT ANYTHING LIKE THIS!
SCREW THE MIRROR... IT'S TIME TO GET SERIOUS!






HOLY SHIT!
THAT IS WILD!
AND WHAT'S EVEN WILDER IS I DON'T WANT TO ROLL OVER AND FALL ASLEEP... I WANNA DO IT AGAIN!


WAIT A MINUTE... WHAT'S THAT?


WHOA!
SO THIS IS HOW SHE "MAKES DO" NOW THAT MY COCK IS ON HIATUS!


OH... WHAT THE HELL!


ALL RIGHT, BIG FELLA! LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'VE GOT!


OH MY GOD...!
OH MY GOD...!!


OH MY FUCKING GOD...!!!

Back at the office, an hour... or so... later...

YOU'RE VERY **QUIET**, CELIA! DO YOU **REGRET** WHAT WE DID?

REGRET?! IT'S **ONE** THING TO BE **UNFAITHFUL** TO MY HUSBAND FOR THE **FIRST** TIME IN OVER **THIRTY YEARS** OF MARRIAGE...!

BUT **UNFAITHFUL** DOESN'T COME **CLOSE** TO DEFINING WHAT **WE** DID HERE! THIS WASN'T A BRIEF **INDISCRETION** OR AN INNOCENT **FLING** THAT A TYPICAL WAYWARD WIFE MAY TRY TO **COVER UP** OR **FORGET!**

IT WASN'T?

YOU **KNOW** IT WASN'T! WE **BOTH** WANTED THIS... YOU COULD **FEEL** IT IN THE AIR! AND WHEN WE FINALLY GAVE IN TO IT, WE... WE **DEVOURED** EACH OTHER!

I'VE **NEVER** FELT LIKE THAT BEFORE! SO... SO **WANTON,** SO... **DECADENT!** EVEN THE OTHER NIGHT WHEN BOB WAS YOUNG AND STRONG! IT WAS **WONDERFUL,** BUT THIS... THIS JUST **WASN'T THE SAME!**

SO, YOU **DO** REGRET IT!


THAT'S JUST IT! I DON'T! I DON'T REGRET WHAT WE DID HERE! NOT ONE BIT! IN FACT, IT'S TAKING EVERY OUNCE OF WILLPOWER I'VE GOT NOT TO DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN RIGHT THIS MINUTE!
WHAT KIND OF PERSON DOES THAT MAKE ME?
A WARM, CARING, EXTREMELY SEXUAL PERSON WHOSE LIFE HAS SUDDENLY BEEN TURNED UPSIDE DOWN AND INSIDE OUT!


OF COURSE YOU CRAVE NEW EXPERIENCES! BECAUSE OF YOUR HUSBAND, YOU HAVE AN ENTIRELY NEW LIFE AHEAD OF YOU... AS DOES HE!
BUT... I CAN'T JUST ABANDON HIM!

AND YOU **WON'T!** BUT IF WE **CAN** FIND AN ANTIDOTE FOR HIM, **MONTHS** OR EVEN **YEARS** DOWN THE ROAD, WHO WILL HE **BE** BY THEN? WILL HE **STILL** BE SOMEONE YOU REALLY WANT TO **COMMIT** YOUR LIFE TO?

BUT HE... HE'S MY **HUSBAND!**

BOB VARNEY WAS YOUR HUSBAND... AND THERE'S **NOTHING** YOU CAN DO FOR **HIM!** **ROBIN GLEASON**, HOWEVER, NEEDS YOUR HELP! THE **SOONER** SHE ACCEPTS HER NEW LIFE, THE **BETTER** FOR HER... AND **EVERYONE** AROUND HER!

BE THERE FOR **HER** AS YOU WOULD FOR A LITTLE SISTER, A ROOMMATE, A **BEST FRIEND!** DO YOU THINK YOU CAN **DO** THAT?

I GUESS I **HAVE** TO, DON'T I? REGARDLESS OF HOW I FEEL ABOUT BOB, IT'S **ROBIN** WHO NEEDS OUR HELP NOW!

SHE'S THE ONE WHO'S THE **MOST CONFUSED** IN ALL THIS SO IT'S UP TO **US** TO SEE THAT SHE COMES OUT OF IT INTACT!

EXACTLY! FOR MY PART, I'LL CONTACT HUMAN RESOURCES AND FIND A NEW POSITION FOR HER HERE! WE CAN'T TRUST HER IN DATA ANALYSIS ANYMORE, BUT WE'LL FIND HER SOMETHING!

AND I'LL DO WHATEVER I CAN TO HELP HER ADJUST TO HER NEW LIFE! AND IF THAT MEANS LETTING GO OF HER OLD ONE, THEN SO BE IT!

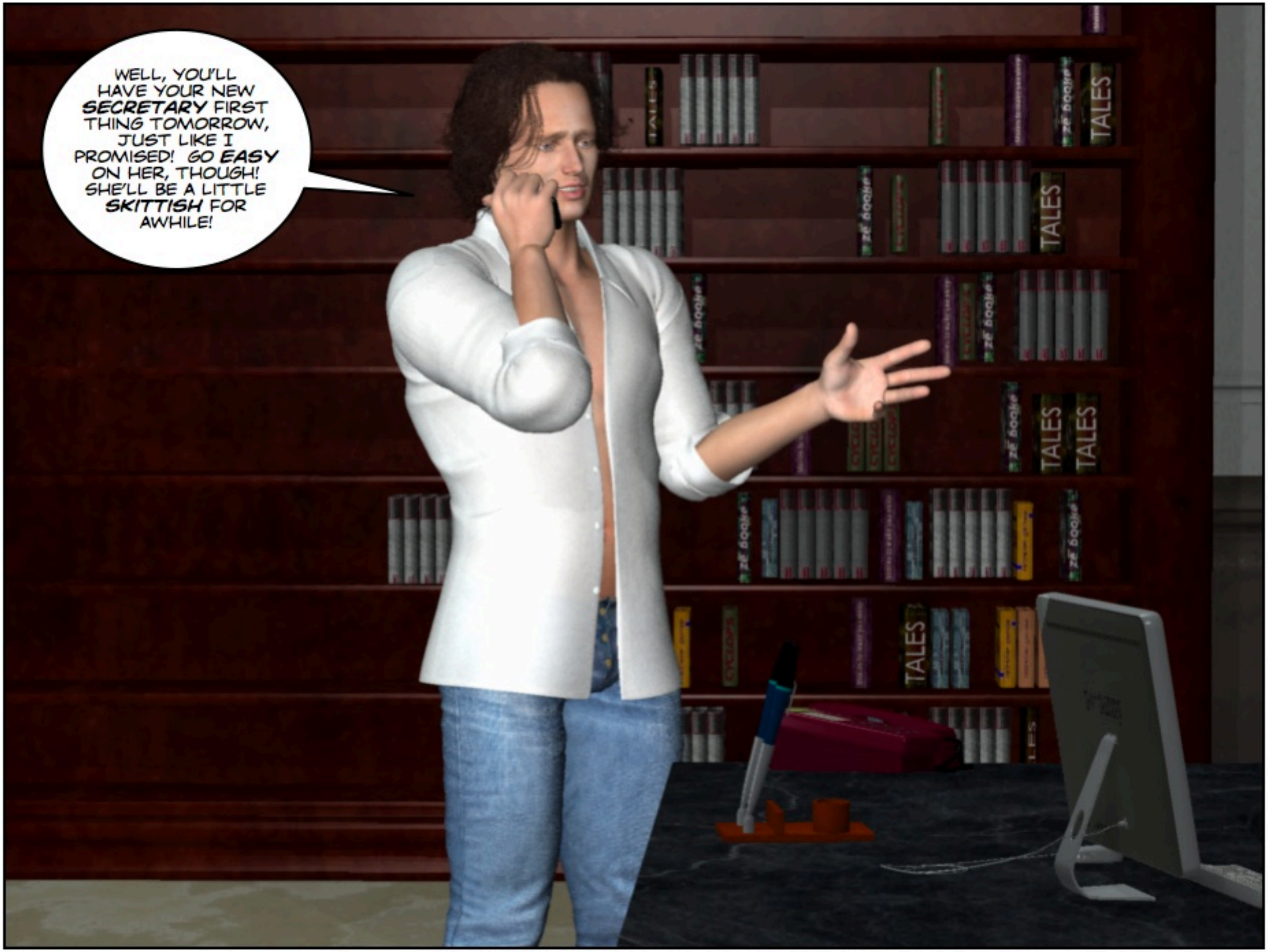

AND AS FOR US...!
WHAT ABOUT US?

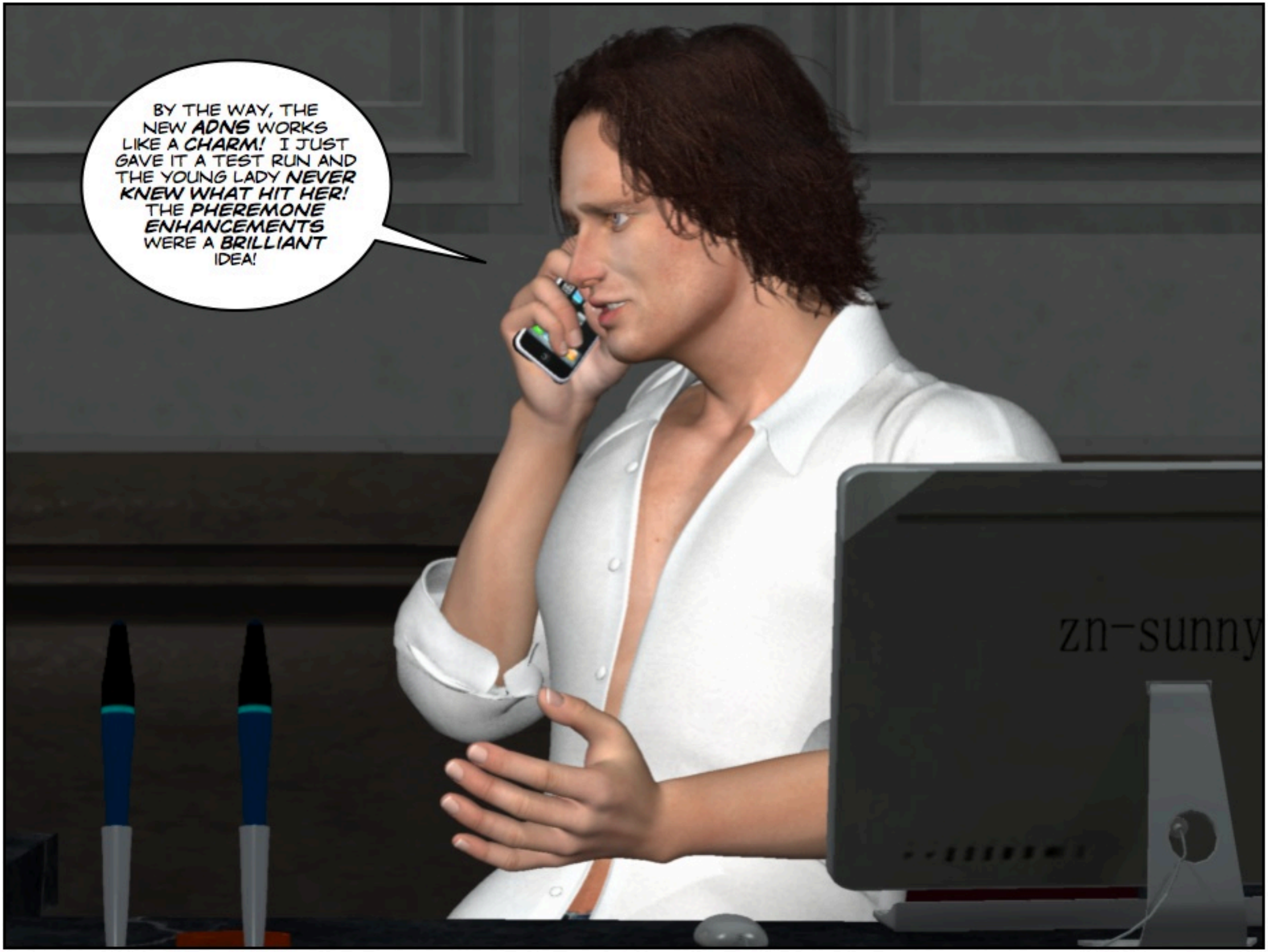
WELL, LET'S CONCENTRATE ON **ROBIN** FOR THE TIME BEING! **SHE'S** OUR PRIORITY! YOU AND I... WELL, LET'S JUST SEE WHAT HAPPENS, **SHALL WE?**

AGREED! BUT FIRST...!




A short time later,
after Celia leaves...
TALES
TALES


WELL, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR NEW SECRETARY FIRST THING TOMORROW, JUST LIKE I PROMISED! GO EASY ON HER, THOUGH! SHE'LL BE A LITTLE SKITTISH FOR AWHILE!
TALES
TALES
TALES
TALES
TALES


BY THE WAY, THE NEW ADNS WORKS LIKE A CHARM! I JUST GAVE IT A TEST RUN AND THE YOUNG LADY NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT HER! THE PHEREMONE ENHANCEMENTS WERE A BRILLIANT IDEA!
zn-sunny


YOU'VE EARNED EVERY BIT OF THAT PROMOTION! THANK YOU AGAIN, SIMON!

743

I'VE HAD THE ENTIRE TRIP HOME TO THINK ABOUT HOW TO ADDRESS ROBIN'S ***LATEST DRAMA***, BUT ***STILL*** HAVEN'T COME UP WITH ***ANYTHING!***

I MEAN, WHO AM I TO LAY INTO HER ABOUT ***DECEIT*** AFTER WHAT ***I*** DID THIS AFTERNOON? TALK ABOUT THE ***POT*** CALLING THE KETTLE ***BLACK!***


PART OF ME THINKS I SHOULD COME RIGHT OUT AND TELL HER EVERYTHING ABOUT ME AND DAVID, BUT SHE'D BE DEVASTATED! AND THAT'S THE LAST THING SHE NEEDS RIGHT NOW!
I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO PLAY IT BY EAR!

YOUR TIMING IS PERFECT! DINNER SHOULD BE READY IN JUST A COUPLE OF MINUTES! ***KICK OFF*** YOUR HEELS AND HAVE A GLASS OF WINE!


WOW! SINCE WHEN ARE YOU COOKING?
SINCE I FIGURED I WAS DUE, AND THIS WOULD GIVE US A CHANCE TO SIT AND TALK FOR AWHILE! SOMETHING I HAVEN'T BEEN VERY GOOD AT LATELY!


THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE CONSIDERING EVERYTHING! WHAT DID YOU WANT TO *TALK* ABOUT?
WELL... I GUESS IT'S *BEST* TO JUST COME RIGHT OUT AND *SAY* THIS... I *SCREWED UP* AT WORK TODAY! *BIG TIME!*
I KNOW!

YOU KNOW? HOW?

DAVID... **MR. MITCHELL** CALLED ME DOWN TO THE OFFICE AND TOLD ME **EVERYTHING!** AND **BEFORE** YOU GET ANGRY, UNDERSTAND THAT HE DID THIS BECAUSE HE WAS **CONCERNED** ABOUT YOU AND WANTED MY... **IDEAS** ON HOW TO HELP!


HE TOLD YOU? EVERYTHING?
YES, BUT WHAT YOU DID DOESN'T MATTER! YOU... WE'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT OF CHANGES THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS! THERE WAS BOUND TO BE A LOT OF CONFUSION... HOW TO ACT AND REACT TO ONE ANOTHER... AND TO OTHERS!

AS YOU AND I **CONTINUE** THROUGH ALL THIS, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE A LOT OF **TOUGH DECISIONS!** DO YOU **UNDERSTAND** WHAT I'M SAYING, **ROBIN?**

"ROBIN?" SO EVEN **HERE** AT HOME, BY **OURSELVES,** IT'S **"ROBIN"?**


THAT'S WHAT I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT! EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE TRYING TO FIND A WAY TO CHANGE YOU BACK, DAVID TELLS ME IT WILL TAKE MONTHS, IF NOT YEARS... AND THAT'S EVEN IF THEY CAN DO IT!
YEARS? I COULD BE LIKE THIS FOR YEARS?

OR *LONGER!* WHICH IS WHY WE *BOTH* THINK THE *BEST* COURSE OF ACTION IS FOR YOU TO *BE* ROBIN *24/7*... EVEN HERE AT *HOME!*

BUT...!


LOOK AT IT **THIS** WAY, HONEY! TO THE WORLD, **BOB VARNEY** IS A **62-YEAR-OLD MAN** CURRENTLY IN **SINGAPORE!** **THAT** ISN'T **YOUR** LIFE ANYMORE!
YOU'RE **ROBIN GLEASON**, A YOUNG, ATTRACTIVE **WOMAN** WHO, **THANKS TO DAVID**, STILL HAS A **NEW JOB** WAITING FOR HER AT **DM INDUSTRIES** TOMORROW MORNING! **THAT'S** THE LIFE YOU NEED TO CONCENTRATE ON... WITH **MY HELP** OF COURSE!


SO, IF I'M NOT YOUR HUSBAND ANYMORE, WHAT DOES THAT MAKE US? ROOMIES? GIRLFRIENDS? BFFS?
I KNOW IT'S A LOT TO DEAL WITH, BUT WE'LL WORK IT ALL OUT TOGETHER!


BUT FIRST, LET'S EAT! I'M *STARVING!* THEN AFTER DINNER, MAYBE I CAN *TEACH* YOU A FEW THINGS ABOUT BEING A *WOMAN!*
OH JOY!


AND IF YOU'RE A GOOD STUDENT, I MIGHT JUST INCLUDE A FEW MORE OF THOSE INTIMATE PERKS WE WOMEN SHARE! HOW'S THAT SOUND?
BETTER! MUCH BETTER!
OKAY, SOUNDS LIKE A DEAL! LET'S EAT!

The next morning...

AM I GOING TO BE HARPING ON YOU **EVERY** MORNING FROM NOW ON? **HURRY UP** OR YOU'LL BE **LATE!**

CUT ME SOME **SLACK**, OKAY? I'M **WEARING** THE DAMN SKIRT YOU PRACTICALLY **FORCED** ME TO WEAR, AREN'T I? IT JUST FEELS A LITTLE **WEIRD** WALKING AROUND IN IT!

YOU LOOK **GREAT!** AND YOU'LL GET USED TO IT IN **NO TIME!** IN FACT, YOU MAY DECIDE YOU **NEVER** WANT TO GO BACK TO **PANTS!**


FAT CHANCE OF THAT!
WHAT WAS THAT?

I SAID, THIS THING IS ***DRAFTY!*** I FEEL ***EXPOSED,*** LIKE ***ANYONE*** COULD LOOK RIGHT UP MY SKIRT AND SEE PRETTY MUCH ***EVERYTHING!***

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT WEARING THE ***PANTYHOSE*** I PUT OUT FOR YOU! BESIDES ALLEVIATING THAT ***"EXPOSED"*** FEELING, THEY ALSO CUT DOWN ON THE ***DRAFT*** YOU'RE COMPLAINING ABOUT!

THEY'RE ALSO CONSIDERED **"PROPER"** OFFICE WEAR, SO I **HIGHLY** RECOMMEND WEARING SOME KIND OF HOSE OR PANTYHOSE TO WORK... **ESPECIALLY** UNTIL WE GET THOSE LEGS **SHAVED!**

FINE! YOU **SOLD** ME, **OKAY?**


BUT YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO GIVE ME A HAND, 'CAUSE I ALREADY DID TRY TO PUT THEM ON AND TORE THEM TO SHREDS!


SIGH!
JUST
ANOTHER
RITE OF
PASSAGE,
SWEETIE!

After a brief visit to Human Resources...

A SECRETARY?! TWENTY-TWO YEARS IN DATA ANALYSIS AND NOW I'M A DAMN SECRETARY? MITCHELL'S GOT HIMSELF A WARPED SENSE OF HUMOR!

I GUESS I CAN'T COMPLAIN ***TOO*** MUCH, THOUGH! AT LEAST I'VE ***STILL*** GOT A ***JOB!*** THEY EVEN WENT AHEAD AND GAVE ME MY ***PAY BUMP***! AND WITH MY SKILLS, AND ANY ***LUCK,*** I SHOULD BE ABLE TO WORK MY WAY OUT OF THE SECRETARIAL POOL IN ***NO TIME!***

H.R. DIDN'T TELL ME WHO I'D BE WORKING FOR, JUST GAVE ME AN OFFICE NUMBER! AND THIS LOOKS LIKE THE PLACE RIGHT HERE!


WOW!
WHAT A SETUP!
AT LEAST THEY HAVE ME WORKING FOR SOME EXECUTIVE!

HMMM... I ACTUALLY HAVE ***MORE*** SPACE HERE THAN I DID AS A ***DATA ANALYST!*** THIS ***MAY*** NOT BE SO ***BAD*** AFTER ALL!


THE DESK LOOKS GREAT ON YOU! I'LL HAVE TO SEND HR A GREAT BIG THANK YOU NOTE!


SIMON? I'M... I'M YOUR SECRETARY?
IT'S MR. GREELEY FOR THE TIME BEING, ROBIN! BUT I'M SURE WE'LL BE ON A FIRST NAME BASIS IN NO TIME!


THIS IS YOUR OFFICE? AND I'M WORKING FOR YOU?
PRETTY SWEET, DON'T YOU THINK? IT'S ALL PART OF MY NEW PROMOTION! GOLDEN BOY MAKES GOOD, EH!


AND I JUST COINCIDENTALLY GOT ASSIGNED TO YOU?
COINCIDENCE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT! DAVID SAID HE NEEDED A FAVOR AND I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE TO HELP YOU OUT!


SO, WHAT DID MR. MITCHELL TELL YOU ABOUT ME?
HE SAID THEY HAD TO FIND A NEW POSITION FOR YOU BECAUSE OF SOME... SECURITY ISSUES! I TOLD HIM WE'D BE A PERFECT FIT!
NO HIGH SECURITY DOCUMENTS GO THROUGH YOUR STATION! JUST GENERAL OFFICE MANAGEMENT PLUS THE OCCASIONAL PERSONAL ERRAND OR TWO!


PERSONAL ERRANDS?
OH, YOU KNOW... COFFEE, DRY CLEANING... THE USUAL STUFF! OH YEAH, HE ALSO MENTIONED YOU WERE ON INDEFINITE PROBATIONARY STATUS!
BUT I'M SURE NEITHER ONE OF US WILL HAVE ANYTHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT, RIGHT?

I MEAN, ALL IT WOULD TAKE IS *ONE* COMPLAINT TO *END* YOUR PROBATION... *AND* YOUR EMPLOYMENT HERE AT *DM* INDUSTRIES! I'D SURE *HATE* TO SEE THAT HAPPEN! *WOULDN'T YOU?*

NO, *MR. GREELEY*... I DEFINITELY *DON'T* WANT THAT TO HAPPEN EITHER!


SUPER! SOUNDS LIKE WE'LL GET ALONG GREAT! TELL YOU WHAT, TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO GET YOURSELF SITUATED OUT HERE, THEN GO GET ME A DOUBLE SHOT LATTE!
WHEN YOU GET BACK WE'LL DISCUSS SOME OF THE DETAILS OF THE JOB! DUTIES, EXPECTATIONS, APPEARANCE...!

APPEARANCE? WH... WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY APPEARANCE?

NOTHING, SWEETHEART! YOU LOOK JUST FINE... FOR A DATA ANALYST! BUT OUT HERE YOU'RE MY REPRESENTATIVE TO THE WORLD AND THAT REQUIRES A LITTLE DIFFERENT... PRESENTATION!

DON'T WORRY! WE'LL HAVE A NICE ***LONG*** TALK ABOUT IT LATER! WHEN YOU BRING ME ***LUNCH!***


WHAT THE HELL HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?

A short while later, a friendly face appears...

HI THERE, **STRANGER!** WE WERE BEGINNING TO **WONDER** ABOUT YOU!

OH, *HI* STACY! UMM... YEAH! I KIND OF GOT... ***REASSIGNED!***

SO I HEARD! DIDN'T KNOW YOU ENDED UP ***HERE*** TILL JUST A FEW MINUTES AGO! WHAT ***HAPPENED,*** IF YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING?

IT'S A LONG, ***BORING*** STORY!

THEN YOU CAN GIVE US ALL THE **GORY** DETAILS AFTER WORK! **MAEVE** AND I WILL COME BY TO GET YOU AT FIVE, BECAUSE YOU'RE **NOT** SKIPPING OUT ON US **THIS** TIME!

I'LL BE HERE THIS TIME! **PROMISE!**


WELL HELLO THERE, STACY! I THOUGHT I HEARD YOUR LOVELY VOICE OUT HERE! YOU'RE HERE TO SEE ME, I HOPE?
JUST STOPPED BY TO MAKE SURE ROBIN WAS OFF TO A GOOD START! YOU BE GOOD TO HER, YOU HEAR?


OF COURSE! I'LL TREAT HER AS I'D TREAT YOU IF YOU WERE MY SECRETARY!
IN YOUR DREAMS, SIMON!
SEE YOU LATER, ROBIN!
OKAY! BYE STACY!

NOW *THAT* IS A SECRETARY! WHICH REMINDS ME, HAVE YOU ORDERED MY *LUNCH* YET?

IT'S ON THE WAY UP, *MR.* GREELEY!

GREAT! THEN NOW WOULD BE A PERFECT TIME TO DISCUSS THOSE DETAILS I MENTIONED EARLIER! PLEASE STEP INTO MY PARLOR...!


SAID THE SPIDER TO THE FLY...!

5:20 at the corner bar...

... AND HE ACTUALLY E-MAILED ME PICTURES OF HOW HE WANTED ME TO DRESS FROM NOW ON! CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?


WELL... CAN YOU?

WELL, HIS METHODS ARE **CRUDE**, TO SAY THE LEAST, BUT TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, **I** WAS GOING TO TELL YOU PRETTY MUCH THE **SAME THING**!

HE MAY BE A **PUTZ**, BUT **SIMON GREELEY** IS A **RISING STAR** IN THIS COMPANY AND STICKING WITH HIM IS THE **SMART MOVE**... BELIEVE ME!

YEAH, **GOOD LUCK** TRYING TO FIND A **CAREER** EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, I'M SORRY... **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**... WHO **ISN'T** WEARING A MINISKIRT, LOW-CUT BLOUSE, OR **BOTH!**

I PRESENT AS ***EXHIBIT A,*** OUR VERY OWN ***CHIEF*** ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, ***STACY MONAGHAN!***

NOTE IF YOU WILL, THE LONG ***SHAPELY*** LEGS EXPOSED TO WELL ***ABOVE*** THE LOWER THIGH REGION!


ALSO OBSERVE THE OPEN DISPLAY OF HER AMPLE BOSOM!
SOME WOULD CALL IT SCANDALOUS, BUT SHE'S BEEN THE CEO'S ASSISTANT FOR YEARS! YOU DO THE MATH!

SERIOUSLY? YOU DON'T CONSIDER IT DEMEANING OR AT LEAST SOME KIND OF HARASSMENT?

DEPENDS ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW! HOW WE ACT AND HOW WE DRESS CAN MAKE OUR BOSSES HAPPY, UNCOMFORTABLE OR DOWNRIGHT SWEATING THROUGH TO THEIR SKIVVIES! SO YOU TELL ME, WHO'S DOING THE HARASSING?

YEAH! EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE DIFFERENT NOW THAT YOU'RE NO LONGER A NUMBER-CRUNCHER! LOOKS COUNT!

GREAT! SO **BOTH** OF YOU THINK I SHOULD START DRESSING THE WAY **SIMON** WANTS?

IF YOU WANT TO HOLD ONTO YOUR PRESENT POSITION LONGER THAN YOU DID THE LAST ONE, YOU **DEFINITELY SHOULD!**

WHAT **HAPPENED** THERE, ANYWAY? DIDN'T YOU HAVE THE **CHOPS** TO DO THE WORK?


NO, UMMM.... I WAS IN WAY OVER MY HEAD! I'M JUST HAPPY THEY OFFERED ME THE TRANSFER SO I STILL HAVE A JOB!
TRUST ME, THERE'S NO SHAME IN BEING AN ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT!
IN FACT, WE SHOULD CELEBRATE! GIRLS' NIGHT OUT! TONIGHT!


WHAT? OH, UMM... I CAN'T! I'VE ALREADY GOT PLANS!
OOOO... A HOT DATE?
NO, JUST GOING TO A MOVIE WITH ANNIE!

A MOVIE? **BORING?** HELL, BRING HER ALONG! THE MORE THE **MERRIER!**

REALLY, GUYS... I **CAN'T!** I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, BUT SOME **OTHER** TIME, OKAY?

PARTY POOPER!

NOW MAEVE, **LET UP** ON HER! ROBIN'S **NEW** IN TOWN AND BEEN THROUGH SOME **MAJOR WORK TRAUMA**! SHE PROBABLY WANTS TO GO HOME, CURL UP IN BED WITH A BOX OF CHOCOLATE AND **CRY IN HER PILLOW!**

NO! IT'S NOT LIKE **THAT!** I JUST...!

DON'T **SWEAT** IT, ROBIN! WE UNDERSTAND! **REALLY** WE DO!

OH **WOW!** I'D BETTER BE HEADING **HOME!** THANKS FOR THE DRINK GUYS! WE'LL GO OUT SOME **OTHER** TIME, OKAY? SEE YOU MONDAY!

BYE ROBIN!

YEAH, BYE!


WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA LETTING HER OFF THE HOOK SO EASILY? I THINK SHE'LL BE A GAS TO PARTY WITH ONCE WE GET HER TO LOOSEN UP!
WHO SAYS I LET HER OFF THE HOOK? YOU'RE RIGHT! THAT POOR GIRL DEFINITELY NEEDS TO LET HER HAIR DOWN!


HI HON, IT'S ME! I'M WILLING TO BET YOU'VE GOT A PHONE NUMBER I NEED...!



A Tangled Web

Chapter Six

by CBlack

A short while later, back at home...

UGH! THANK GOD IT'S FRIDAY! IT'LL TAKE AT LEAST ALL WEEKEND TO DE-STRESS AND FIGURE OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH BEING SIMON'S NEW "GIRL FRIDAY"!


FIRST THINGS FIRST... I'VE GOTTA CHANGE AND POUR MYSELF A STIFF ONE!


HEY HONEY, HOW'D IT GO TODAY?
OH... WHERE DO I START?

WHERE'D THEY ASSIGN YOU? WHATEVER IT WAS, I HOPE IT WASN'T TOO ***STRESSFUL*** STARTING ALL OVER LIKE THAT!

A ***LITTLE*** TOUGH, BUT NOTHING A FEW ***DRINKS*** WON'T CURE!


MY THINKING EXACTLY!
WHOA! WHAT ARE YOU ALL DOLLED UP FOR?

GIRLS' NIGHT OUT, SILLY! C'MON, WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU READY!

WHAT?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN "GIRLS' NIGHT OUT"? WHAT MADE YOU THINK OF THAT?


WELL I WAS ALREADY PLANNING ON THE TWO OF US GOING OUT SOMETIME THIS WEEKEND, BUT WHEN YOUR FRIENDS FROM WORK CALLED...!
WAIT A MINUTE? THEY CALLED? HERE?

YES, AND **NEXT** TIME YOU COME UP WITH A COVER STORY, **PLEASE** LET ME KNOW ABOUT IT! I **ALMOST** BLEW IT WHEN STACY CALLED ASKING FOR **"ANNIE MCCLURE"!** LUCKILY, I REMEMBERED IT WAS THE NAME I USED ON **MONDAY** DURING MY LITTLE... VISIT!

BUT I DON'T **WANT** A "GIRLS' NIGHT OUT"! I ALREADY TOLD THEM WE HAD **PLANS!**


AND OUR PLANS ARE TO MEET THEM AT CLUB PARADOX AT 9! THAT ONLY GIVES US ABOUT TWO HOURS TO GET YOU READY, SO CHOP-CHOP!
WHY IS NO ONE LISTENING TO ME? I DON'T WANT TO GO OUT!

BUT **I** DO! AND I WANT **YOU** TO GO WITH ME! WE ARE **NOT** AN **OLD MARRIED COUPLE** WHO SPENDS THE EVENING FALLING ASLEEP IN FRONT OF THE TV ANYMORE! WE'RE **YOUNG**, WE'RE **VIBRANT**, WE'RE...!

WOMEN! **BOTH** OF US ARE **WOMEN!** **YOU'VE** HAD YOUR WHOLE **LIFE** TO GET USED TO IT, **I'VE** ONLY HAD A FEW **DAYS!**

AND THE **SOONER** YOU FIGURE OUT HOW TO **COPE** WITH THAT, THE **BETTER!** LOOK HONEY, WE'RE NOT **DRAGGING** YOU OUT TO GET YOU **LAID**... THAT'LL COME **LATER!**

WHAT?!

JUST KIDDING!


BUT YOU JUST NEED TO LET YOUR HAIR DOWN, SPEND SOME TIME WITH A GROUP OF US AND LEARN WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE YOUNG, SEXY WOMEN!


I DON'T GET A SAY IN THIS AT ALL, DO I?
NONE WHATSOEVER! SO, GET A MOVE ON... WE'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO!


Nine-ish, at Club Paradox...


THINK THEY'LL SHOW?
ACCORDING TO ANNIE, SHE SAID THEY'D BE HERE IF SHE HAD TO DRAG ROBIN KICKING AND SCREAMING! SO... YEAH! I THINK THEY'LL SHOW!

SO WHAT DO YOU *THINK* OF ROBIN... *TRUTHFULLY?*

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT SOMEONE WHO ***LOOKS*** LIKE HER COULD BE SO ***NAIVE***, SO ***UNCOMFORTABLE*** IN HER OWN SKIN! THERE'S ***GOT*** TO BE A STORY THERE! THAT'S ***ONE*** OF THE REASONS I THOUGHT TONIGHT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA! GET HER OUT OF THE OFFICE AND SEE IF SHE ***OPENS UP*** A LITTLE!


LET ME GUESS, HER FRIEND IS ONE OF THE OTHER REASONS!
YEAH, I'M CURIOUS ABOUT HER, TOO! SHE APPEARS OUT OF NOWHERE AND SUDDENLY HAS DAVID'S UNDIVIDED ATTENTION!


YOU'RE NOT JEALOUS ARE YOU?
HARDLY! I'M JUST BEING A GOOD ASSISTANT AND WATCHING OUT FOR MY BOSS, THAT'S ALL! I FIGURE BY THE END OF THE EVENING, I'LL KNOW IF I HAVE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT OR NOT!


WELL, AT LEAST SHE'S TRUE TO HER WORD... THEY'RE HERE!

I FEEL LIKE A PIECE OF ***MEAT!*** A ***NAKED*** PIECE OF MEAT ON ***DISPLAY*** IN A ***BUTCHER SHOP*** FULL OF ***HYENAS!***

THAT'S A PRETTY ***GRIM*** INTERPRETATION! YOU JUST NEED TO ***RELAX,*** HONEY! RELAX AND ***ENJOY*** THE EVENING!


ENJOY THE EVENING? I LOOK LIKE A HOOKER! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MADE ME DRESS UP LIKE THIS!
YOU DO NOT LOOK LIKE A HOOKER! YOU LOOK FABULOUS! AND, AS I REMEMBER IT, I DID GIVE YOU A CHOICE!


SOME CHOICE! GO OUT WITH YOU ALL, DRESSED LIKE THIS, OR SLEEP ON THE SOFA... ALONE... INDEFINITELY!
AND YOU CHOSE WISELY, ROBIN-SAN!


NOW, TRY TO REMEMBER TO TALK ABOUT US AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE! STICK WITH THE COVER STORY, OKAY?
YES, DEAR!

HEY ROBIN, YOU *MADE* IT! AND *WOW*, YOU LOOK *GREAT!*

THANKS. I DON'T THINK *INTRODUCTIONS* ARE NECESSARY, SINCE YOU ALL OBVIOUSLY *CONSPIRED* TOGETHER TO GET ME HERE!

IT'S FOR YOUR *OWN GOOD*, ROBIN!

HI, I'M STACY! IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU **OFFICIALLY,** ANNIE!

SAME HERE, STACY! AND **YOU** MUST BE ***MAEVE!***

YOU **GOT** IT! NICE TO MEET **YOU,** TOO!

BEFORE I GET **TOO** SETTLED, I NEED TO VISIT THE **POWDER ROOM!** DON'T LET ROBIN GET INTO TOO MUCH **TROUBLE** WHILE I'M GONE!

DON'T WORRY, WE'LL **TRY** AND KEEP HER UNDER CONTROL!

YOU GUYS ARE JUST **TOO** DAMN FUNNY! I JUST **CAN'T** STOP LAUGHING!

I SEE YOU TWO ALREADY GOT STARTED! WHERE'S THE WAITRESS? I ***DEFINITELY*** NEED A DRINK!

OH, SHE'LL BE BY ***EVENTUALLY***, I'M SURE! BUT THE ***BAR'S*** RIGHT THERE!


GREAT! OH... I DIDN'T BRING A PURSE! ANNIE'S GOT ALL OUR MONEY!
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT MONEY! IT'LL BE TAKEN CARE OF, TRUST ME!

ALREADY GOT A **TAB** GOING? **GREAT!** BE RIGHT BACK!

MONEY! THAT'S SO CUTE!

TOTALLY!


THANKS! I THINK WE HAVE A TAB GOING!
NO, THAT GENTLEMAN OVER THERE TOOK CARE OF IT!


HIYA!
OH, UH... THANK YOU!


I'M LANCE! I DON'T THINK I'VE SEEN YOU AROUND HERE BEFORE!
UMMM... FIRST TIME HERE! JUST MOVED TO TOWN... CAME WITH FRIENDS!


NEW TO TOWN? I'D LOVE TO SHOW YOU AROUND! I'M SURE BETWEEN THE TWO OF US WE CAN FIND A LOT OF INTERESTING THINGS TO DO TOGETHER!
UMMM, I DON'T KNOW! I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO MY FRIENDS! THANKS FOR THE DRINK!

REMIND ME *NEVER* TO WANDER OFF *ALONE* LIKE THAT AGAIN IN *HERE!*

WHY? GET THE WRONG *DRINK* OR SOMETHING?


NO, BUT THE GUY WHO BOUGHT IT FOR ME WAS ABOUT AS SLEAZY AS THEY GET!
OH, THEY CAN BE MUCH SLEAZIER, HONEY! BELIEVE ME! YOU JUST HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM!


WOW! IT LOOKS LIKE I'VE FOUND THE HOTTEST TABLE IN THE CLUB! ANYONE LIKE TO DANCE?


HOW 'BOUT YOU? I BET YOU'VE GOT SOME AMAZING MOVES... AND NOT JUST ON THE DANCE FLOOR!
UMMM... I... I...!


HER DANCE CARD'S FULL UP, BUBBA! HOW 'BOUT TAKIN' ME FOR A SPIN OUT THERE?


THANK YOU!
YOU OWE ME ONE... BIG TIME!
C'MON, BIG GUY, LET'S CLEAR OURSELVES SOME SPACE!

DID I **MISS** ANYTHING? I SEE **MAEVE** DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME!

SHE'S RUNNING **INTERFERENCE!** ROBIN, HERE, PICKED HERSELF UP AN **ADMIRER!**

WHAT? I DIDN'T PICK **ANYONE** UP! HE... **HE** BOUGHT ME A DRINK, THEN **FOLLOWED** ME OVER HERE, AND...!

CALM DOWN, HONEY! IT **HAPPENS!** WOW! YOU REALLY **DON'T** GO TO PLACES LIKE THIS, **DO YOU?**

NO! **NEVER!** AND **THIS** IS THE REASON WHY!

DON'T LET HIM **SPOOK** YOU, HONEY! THEY'RE NOT **ALL** LIKE THAT! I KNOW THAT FOR A **FACT!**

YOU KNOW, ROBIN, WITH A LITTLE ***EXPERIENCE***, YOU'LL FIND THAT SUCH SITUATIONS CAN EASILY BE ***DEFUSED!*** MEN, IN GENERAL, ARE LIKE ***PUPPIES!*** THEY'RE ***EASY*** TO TRAIN WITH THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF ***POSITIVE*** AND ***NEGATIVE*** REINFORCEMENT!


YOU REALLY THINK THAT SPRAYING THAT GUY IN THE FACE WITH A WATER BOTTLE IS THE WAY TO GO?
OH, I'M SURE THAT WOULD WORK, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO EXTREME! USUALLY A SIMPLE, BUT SWEET "NO" WILL DO THE TRICK! THE MAIN THING IS NOT TO LOSE YOUR COMPOSURE!


EXACTLY! AND IT ALSO DOESN'T HURT TO THROW IN A LITTLE VISUAL "TAUNT" OF WHAT THEY'RE NOT GETTING BECAUSE THEY BEHAVED BADLY!
I DON'T GET IT!


HMMM... LET'S TRY AN EXPERIMENT! WATCH AND LEARN!


A PINOT GRIS, PLEASE... OREGON, IF YOU HAVE ONE!
COMIN' RIGHT UP!
WHOA! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT FOR YOU, HOT STUFF!


THEN MAYBE WE CAN TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER AT MY PLACE! WADDYA SAY?
I SAY CALL ME...

...AFTER YOU'VE MOVED OUT OF YOUR PARENTS' BASEMENT AND ARE SPORTING SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE PROMISING THAN THAT ROLL OF DIMES IN YOUR PANTS!


CIAO... HOT STUFF!

OKAY, YOU GOT A ***FREE DRINK*** AND PUT THE ***SCHMUCK*** IN HIS PLACE! THAT'S EASY FOR ***YOU***, BUT I'M NOWHERE ***NEAR*** AS CONFIDENT AS YOU!

OH, BUT WE'RE NOT ***DONE*** WITH HIM YET! YOU'RE UP, ANNIE!

AH, I ***SEE*** WHERE YOU'RE GOING WITH THIS! ALL RIGHT... BE RIGHT BACK!


A COSMOPOLITAN, PLEASE!


AND PUT IT ON MY TAB, HONEY!
WELL, THANK YOU!


DARLIN', IF I SAID YOU HAD A BEAUTIFUL BODY, WOULD YOU HOLD IT AGAINST ME?


OH MY! THAT ONE'S OLDER THAN... MY MOTHER! MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME...


...WHEN YOU GET SOME ORIGINAL MATERIAL!


THAT WAS KIND OF FUN!
SO... NOW HE'S 0 FOR 2! I STILL DON'T SEE THE POINT!

DID YOU HEAR THE ***DIFFERENCE*** IN HIS APPROACHES? HE WAS DOWNRIGHT ***CRUDE*** WITH ME, BUT ONLY MILDLY ***PATHETIC*** WITH ANNIE! HE'S ***LEARNING!***

LEARNING ***WHAT?*** HOW TO MORE SUCCESSFULLY ***HIT ON WOMEN?*** I'M STILL OBVIOUSLY ***MISSING SOMETHING*** HERE! ***WHY*** WOULD YOU WANT HIM TO LEARN SOMETHING LIKE ***THAT?***


WHAT HE'S LEARNING IS HOW NOT TO BE SUCH A DOUCHEBAG! IN JUST A FEW SHORT MINUTES, ANNIE AND I HAVE DEFUSED OUR LITTLE EXPERIMENT OVER THERE FROM JERK CONDITION 2 DOWN TO JERKCON 3 OR EVEN JERKCON 4! IT'S REALLY VERY EASY ONCE YOU KNOW HOW!

WAIT A MINUTE! YOU DON'T ACTUALLY EXPECT ME TO TRY THAT TOO, DO YOU?

WHY NOT? BUT REMEMBER, YOU'VE GOT TO BE CONFIDENT ENOUGH TO DEAL WITH WHATEVER HE THROWS AT YOU!

IF HE SPOTS THAT "DEER IN THE HEADLIGHTS" LOOK ON YOUR FACE, LIKE YOU HAD EARLIER WITH GOOD OL' LANCE, HE'LL REVERT BACK TO HIS OLD WAYS BEFORE YOU CAN SAY "VIAGRA!"


SAY ROBIN, HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORN YOUR HAIR IN A PONYTAIL LIKE THIS?
UMMM... EVER SINCE ITS BEEN LONG ENOUGH! WHY?


JUST WONDERING IF YOU'VE EVER CONSIDERED A DIFFERENT LOOK!
GOOD LUCK WITH THAT! SHE'S NOT BIG ON SALONS!
I LIKE MY HAIR LIKE THIS! IT'S OUT OF THE WAY AND EASY TO DEAL WITH!

OH, IT'S DEFINITELY ***CUTE***, BUT ***THAT'S*** THE PROBLEM! WE NEED SOMETHING NOT QUITE AS ***RESTRAINED*** TO GIVE YOU THAT AIR OF ***CONFIDENCE*** YOU NEED!

LOOK, YOU TWO, I REALLY, ***REALLY*** DON'T WANT TO DO THIS! ANNIE... YOU ***KNOW*** HOW MUCH! ***HELP ME OUT HERE!***


UH-UH, GIRLFRIEND! I'M WITH STACY 100%! THIS IS SOMETHING YOU NEED TO DO! IT'S ALL PART OF OUR GIRLS' NIGHT OUT! UNDERSTAND?
SIGH! YEAH... I UNDERSTAND!


GREAT! THEN LET'S YOU AND I HEAD TO THE LADIES' ROOM AND DO SOMETHING WITH THIS CUTIE-DO OF YOURS!
FINE... WHATEVER!


WELCOME BACK! HEY, WHERE'S YOUR DANCE PARTNER?
OH, YOU MEAN MR. ALL-TALK AND NO-MOVES? I WORE HIM OUT!
WHERE ARE THEY OFF TO?


GET COMFY AND I'LL FILL YOU IN...!

A while later, back at the bar...

MAN, MAYBE THEY'RE ***RIGHT***... THAT ***TIRED*** OLD APPROACH OF MINE JUST ***DOESN'T*** CUT IT ANYMORE! THINK I'LL JUST FINISH UP THIS DRINK AND HEAD HOME!

GIN AND TONIC, PLEASE!




THANK YOU!!


GO AHEAD AND PUT THAT ON MY TAB, BARTENDER!
OH, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT!


PLEASE, I INSIST! NOT TOO MANY WOMEN ORDER G&TS THESE DAYS! IT'S USUALLY SOME FANCY THING I'VE NEVER HEARD OF!
WELL, I'VE ALWAYS HAD A TASTE FOR THESE! THANKS!


SAY, WANNA GO GET CRAZY ON THE DANCE FLOOR AND THEN MAYBE...
COOL IT, SAM! TIRED OLD APPROACH NOT WORKING, REMEMBER?
UMMM... WOULD YOU LIKE TO DANCE?


OH... THANKS, BUT I'M NOT REALLY MUCH OF A DANCER AND NEED TO GET BACK TO MY FRIENDS!
MAYBE ANOTHER TIME!

HEY, GIN AND TONIC... CAN I AT LEAST GET YOUR NAME?


NEXT TIME...!
MAYBE...!


HAIL THE RETURN OF THE CONQUERING HEROINE!
A HEROINE WITH A STOMACH FULL OF BUTTERFLIES, THAT'S FOR DAMN SURE!
YOU DID GREAT, HONEY! I'M PROUD OF YOU!

I DON'T THINK I COULD'VE PULLED IT OFF WITHOUT THOSE HELPFUL ***TIPS*** OF YOURS! YOU WERE ***RIGHT***... ONCE I SAT DOWN, HE ***BARELY*** TOOK HIS EYES OFF MY ***LEGS!***

AND YOUR ***ASS*** WHEN YOU WERE WALKING AWAY! YOU HAD HIM IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND, GIRL! ***NICE JOB!***

YES, NICE JOB... ***GIRL!*** HOW'D IT FEEL?

ALL RIGHT, I **ADMIT** IT! I KIND OF **LIKED** IT, OKAY? IT WAS VERY... **EMPOWERING** TO BE ABLE TO **MANIPULATE** SOMEONE LIKE THAT! I'M NOT USED TO THAT!

WELL GET **USED** TO IT, HONEY! IT'S **HIGH TIME** YOU REALIZED THAT YOU'VE GOT THE **POWER,** SO **DON'T** BE AFRAID TO **USE IT! ESPECIALLY** WHEN IT COMES TO **SIMON!** HE MAY BE YOUR **BOSS,** BUT HE'S **JUST ANOTHER GUY!** REMEMBER THAT, AND YOU'LL DO JUST **FINE!**

AND NOW THAT WE'VE COMPLETED ***LESSON NUMBER ONE,*** IT'S TIME FOR LESSON NUMBER TWO... ***THE DANCE FLOOR!*** C'MON ROBIN! LET'S SHOW THE ***REST*** OF THE ROOM WHAT YOU'VE GOT!

OH GOD... NO! I HAVEN'T DANCED IN...WELL, A ***LONG*** TIME! AND ESPECIALLY NOT LIKE ***THAT!***


IT'S EASY! JUST FOLLOW MY LEAD AND WIGGLE AND SHAKE WHEN I DO!
BUT I CAN'T....!


HEY! REMEMBER, YOU OWE ME, HONEY! OR, I CAN GET YOUR GOOD BUDDY LANCE BACK OVER HERE TO GIVE YOU HIS VERSION OF DANCE LESSONS!
SIGH! FINE! WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY...!


BUT DON'T BE SURPRISED IF I *BREAK AN ANKLE!*
IF YOU DO, I *PROMISE* THERE'LL BE *PLENTY* OF GUYS TO CARRY YOU OFF THE FLOOR!

THIS IS ***GREAT!*** I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET ROBIN TO LOOSEN UP FOR... WELL, ***QUITE A WHILE!*** I THINK BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WE'LL MAKE A ***WOMAN*** OUT OF THAT GIRL YET!

I HOPE SO! I DIDN'T WANT TO SAY THIS IN FRONT OF HER BECAUSE IT MIGHT UPSET HER, BUT HER NEW BOSS, SIMON, ***CAN*** BE KIND OF A ***LECH!*** AND THE ***SOONER*** SHE LEARNS TO HANDLE HIM, THE ***BETTER!***

WELL I'M GLAD SHE'S GOT BOTH YOU **AND** DAVID, I MEAN... **MR. MITCHELL,** LOOKING OUT FOR HER AT WORK!

SO DAVID'S TAKEN A SPECIAL **INTEREST** IN ROBIN, **TOO,** HAS HE? ALL THANKS TO **YOU,** NO DOUBT!

I **DON'T** KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! I'VE **MET** WITH HIM A FEW TIMES AND HELPED ROBIN GET HER **JOB**, BUT BESIDES THAT...!

LET'S PUT OUR **CARDS** ON THE **TABLE**... ANNIE! **I'VE** KNOWN DAVID A **LONG** TIME! I KNOW HIS STRENGTHS **AND** HIS WEAKNESSES, AND **PRETTY YOUNG BLONDES** ARE HIS **BIGGEST WEAKNESS!**

LOOK, STACY! I **NEVER...!**

LET ME FINISH! I'M **VERY** PROTECTIVE OF HIM AND WILL DO **WHATEVER** IT TAKES TO SEE THAT HE DOESN'T GET **HURT!** I CAN BE A **SERIOUS BITCH** TO ANYONE WHO GETS ON MY **BAD SIDE!**


SINCE YOU SEEM TO ALREADY KNOW A LOT MORE THAN I THOUGHT, I WON'T TRY TO PULL THE WOOL OVER YOUR EYES! REST ASSURED, I HAVE NO INTENTION OF HURTING DAVID! HE'S A GOOD MAN AND I WANT NOTHING BUT HAPPINESS FOR HIM! IF ITS WITH ME, THAT'S YET TO BE SEEN, BUT HE'S BEEN VERY GOOD TO ME... AND TO ROBIN!
SO IT SEEMS!

ONE OTHER THING...! CAN WE ***PLEASE*** KEEP THIS BETWEEN ***YOU AND ME?*** ROBIN KNOWS ***NOTHING*** ABOUT MY... ***RELATIONSHIP*** WITH DAVID AND I WANT IT TO ***STAY*** THAT WAY, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING!

I DON'T WANT HER TO THINK THAT ***I'M*** THE ONLY REASON SHE GOT THIS JOB!

FAIR ENOUGH! SHE ***WON'T*** HEAR IT FROM ***ME!***

I JUST HOPE THAT **WHATEVER** YOU AND DAVID DECIDE TO DO, IT'S BEST FOR **ALL** CONCERNED!

I HOPE SO TOO, STACY! I **REALLY** HOPE SO, TOO!

Later... after the club closes...

OH MY GOD! I DIDN'T THINK THOSE TWO WOULD EVER LET ME LEAVE! AND YOU WERE NO HELP AT ALL!

GUILTY AS CHARGED! DON'T YOU SEE, HONEY? IT'S A NECESSARY PART OF YOUR EDUCATION!

THIS ISN'T EXACTLY LIKE ANY SCHOOL I'VE ATTENDED BEFORE!


SO, TELL ME THE TRUTH... WHAT'D YOU THINK OF YOUR VERY FIRST GIRLS' NIGHT OUT?
WELL, I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT... I DID HAVE FUN!

I KNEW YOU WOULD IF YOU ***LOOSENED UP*** AND GAVE IT A ***CHANCE!*** HECK, BY THE END OF THE EVENING I'D PRACTICALLY ***FORGOTTEN*** THAT YOU'VE ONLY BEEN A WOMAN FOR A ***FEW DAYS!***

NOT ***SURPRISING*** CONSIDERING ALL THE THINGS ***YOU THREE*** HAD ME DOING!


JUST TYPICAL GIRLS' NIGHT OUT STUFF, HONEY, THAT'S ALL! SO... HOW'S IT FEEL?
HOW'S WHAT FEEL?


YOU'RE OFFICIALLY ONE OF THE GIRLS NOW! HOW'S IT FEEL?
STRANGELY... LIBERATING! THE WAY EVERYONE, THE GIRLS... AND THE GUYS, ALL ACCEPTED ME... IT'S, WELL... IT'S LIKE A WEIGHT HAS BEEN LIFTED FROM MY SHOULDERS!
I'M NOT AFRAID OF BEING EXPOSED AS BOB-IN-A-DRESS ANYMORE! I THINK I CAN PULL THIS OFF FOR AS LONG AS I NEED TO!


THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M HOPING FOR TOO! I WANT YOU, ROBIN, TO GET TO A PLACE WHERE YOU FEEL SELF-SUFFICIENT AND CONFIDENT ENOUGH TO NOT NEED ME TO GET YOU THROUGH EVERY NEW SITUATION YOU ENCOUNTER!
IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D THINK YOU WERE TRYING TO GET RID OF ME!

OH **GOD**, HONEY, **NO!** IT'S JUST THAT OUR LIVES HAVE CHANGED **SO MUCH** LATELY AND AND I'M AFRAID THEY'RE GOING TO **CONTINUE** TO DO SO! I JUST WANT YOU TO BE **PREPARED** TO DEAL WITH **WHATEVER** COMES YOUR WAY!

WELL, CONSIDERING THE **COACHING** TEAM I SEEM TO HAVE ACQUIRED, I SHOULD DO **PRETTY WELL!**


I'M GLAD YOU THINK THAT, BECAUSE THIS PARTICULAR COACH HAS ONE MORE LITTLE TASK FOR YOU TO DO BEFORE WE CALL IT A NIGHT!
OH REALLY? AND WHAT WOULD THAT BE?

I'VE GOT A LITTLE **SURPRISE** FOR YOU, BUT IT'S FOR **ROBIN,** AND ROBIN **ALONE!** IT'S **NOT** FOR **BOB AT ALL,** AND IF I SENSE HIM AROUND ANYWHERE, **THE DEAL'S OFF!**

OOOO! I THINK I CAN SEND GRUMPY OLD BOB ON AN **ERRAND** OR TWO! **GO ON!**


I WANT YOU TO PRETEND I'M SOMEONE YOU JUST MET... SOMEONE WHO HAS SOMETHING YOU DESPERATELY WANT... SOMETHING YOU WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET!
SOUNDS KIND OF KINKY!


MMM-HMM! I'LL GO INTO THE BATHROOM AND GET READY! YOU, LOOK THROUGH MY THINGS AND USE WHATEVER YOU WANT! AND WHEN I COME OUT, I WANT TO GET WET JUST LOOKING AT YOU! GOT IT?


WHEW! YEAH! I GOT IT! AND I'LL DO MY BEST NOT TO DISAPPOINT!
LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, LOVE!


THIS IS GONNA BE GOOD!


WOW! THAT GIRL HAS BEEN DOING SOME SERIOUS SHOPPING! I HAD NO IDEA....!


OH YEAH! THAT'S THE ONE!


OH MY GOD! THIS WAS A TOTAL PAIN IN THE ASS TO GET INTO, BUT... WOW! IT WAS WORTH IT!


NOT A HINT OF OL' WHAT'S-HIS-NAME IN THIS MIRROR! NO ONE HERE BUT YOUNG, SMOKIN' HOT ROBIN! I THINK CELIA WILL APPROVE!


ALL RIGHT THEN... LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD!
I'M READY WHEN YOU ARE, LOVE!


WELL, WELL, WELL... LOOK AT YOU! MY GIRL'S SHOWING ME HER SLUTTY SIDE, HMMM?
WHATEVER IT TAKES, REMEMBER?

I'M HAVING ***TROUBLE*** REMEMBERING THAT SCARED AND STUBBORN ***GIRL*** WHO ***COMPLAINED*** VEHEMENTLY ABOUT THE FACT SHE HAD TO WEAR A ***DRESS*** EARLIER TODAY!

SEEING YOU HERE LIKE ***THIS,*** I CAN'T IMAGINE THAT ***YOU'RE*** THE SAME PERSON!

WELL, ***EARLIER*** I HAD TO DEAL WITH A LOT OF ***INTERFERENCE*** FROM A SCARED AND STUBBORN ***OLD MAN!***

AND NOW...?

THAT'S **GOOD** TO KNOW!

NOW ITS JUST US GIRLS... **CELIA AND ROBIN**... READY AND **WILLING** TO GO **CRAZY** ON EACH OTHER!


THEN MAYBE YOU CAN TELL ME, GIRL TO GIRL... WHEN THAT GUY WAS HITTING ON YOU AT THE BAR, DID YOU EVEN FOR A SECOND, THINK ABOUT HOW BIG HE WAS?
WHAT? OF COURSE NOT, I...!

C'MON, ROBIN! REMEMBER, IT'S JUST US GIRLS! TELL ME THE TRUTH, BECAUSE WE BOTH KNOW HE TURNED YOU ON!

I COULD SEE THE FLUSH IN YOUR CHEEKS, YOUR HARD NIPPLES POKING THROUGH YOUR DRESS, AND I'LL BET YOU WERE MORE THAN A LITTLE MOIST, WEREN'T YOU?

WELL, MAYBE.... BUT...!

WERE YOU AS WET *THEN* AS YOU ARE *NOW?* WONDERING WHAT IT WOULD FEEL LIKE TO HAVE HIS *COCK* SLIDING IN AND OUT OF YOU INSTEAD OF MY *FINGERS?*

NO... NOT *THEN!* I WOULDN'T...!

OH, BUT YOU ARE *NOW*, AREN'T YOU? AND WELL YOU *SHOULD!* THERE'S *NOTHING* LIKE THE FEEL OF A HARD *COCK* BEING *THRUST* INSIDE YOU... OVER AND OVER...!


AND THAT'S WHERE MY "LITTLE SURPRISE" COMES IN!


OH MY GOD, CELIA! WHERE DID YOU...?


I KEPT IT HIDDEN IN A *DIFFERENT* SPOT FROM MY *OTHER* TOYS THAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING WITH! LIKE I SAID, I WANTED *THIS* TO BE A *SURPRISE!*


I DON'T KNOW...!

AGAIN... IT'S JUST **US GIRLS,** ROBIN! NO ONE ELSE! IT'S ALL UP TO **YOU!** ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY IS **"NO"**, AND I'LL TAKE IT OFF AND WE GO TO BED... **NO QUESTIONS ASKED!**


SO... WHAT DO YOU SAY, ROBIN? ANOTHER NIGHT OF SPOONING AND CUDDLING...?

...OR AN EXPERIENCE I *PROMISE* YOU'LL *NEVER FORGET!*


WELL... IN FOR A PENNY...!


... IN FOR A POUND!




GASP! OH MY GOD! IT'S... IT'S...!

PRETTY ***DIFFERENT*** FROM A ***HAND-HELD*** TOY, ISN'T IT? FEELING THE POWER FROM ***ANOTHER PERSON*** THRUSTING INTO YOU CHANGES EVERYTHING FOR THE ***BETTER***, DON'T YOU THINK?


YOU CAN'T STOP IT... YOU DON'T WANT TO STOP IT, BECAUSE YOU KNOW THAT AT ANY MOMENT... WITH EACH THRUST, YOU MIGHT...


OOOOOOOOOOHH
MY GOD!


OH MY GOD... OH MY GOD... OH MY GOD...!!


SO... WHAT DO YOU THINK? HOW DOES IT COMPARE?


AGAIN...!


BUT THIS TIME, A LITTLE DIFFERENT...!







A Tangled Web

Chapter Seven

by CBlack

Monday morning arrives...

ROBIN HONEY, CAN YOU COME IN FOR A MINUTE?

I'LL BE RIGHT THERE, MR. GREELEY.


NOW THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!


WELL, I TRY TO BE PROMPT, MR. GREELEY!


THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN! THE OUTFIT! IT'S NOT EXACTLY LIKE THE ONES WE TALKED ABOUT, BUT THE SKIRT'S A DEFINITE IMPROVEMENT! THOSE GAMS OF YOURS WILL IMPRESS ANYONE WHO COMES TO SEE ME! I GUARANTEE IT!


OH, WELL I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT, BUT I BOUGHT IT MOSTLY BECAUSE THAT LONGER SKIRT WAS UNCOMFORTABLE AND DIFFICULT TO MOVE IN!


SO, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, MR. GREELEY? I ASSUME YOU CALLED ME IN FOR SOMETHING BESIDES A WARDROBE DISCUSSION!

UM, YEAH! I NEED YOU TO CLEAR MY SCHEDULE THIS AFTERNOON! SOMETHING ***IMPORTANT*** CAME UP AND I'LL BE OUT OF MY OFFICE THE REST OF THE DAY!

YES, I KNOW! ***I*** TOOK THE CALL FROM R&D AND ASSUMED AS MUCH! I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF RESCHEDULING ***ALL*** YOUR AFTERNOON APPOINTMENTS!


WOW... THANKS, ROBIN! UMM, I GUESS THAT'LL BE ALL FOR NOW!
OKAY, MR. GREELEY!


OH, AND ROBIN...?
YES, MR. GREELEY?

KEEP UP THE **GOOD WORK** AND YOU'LL BE CALLIN' ME **SIMON** IN **NO TIME!!**

DARE TO DREAM, MR. GREELEY... DARE TO DREAM!


HMMM... SOMEONE DEVELOPED A BIT OF A BACKBONE OVER THE WEEKEND! FORTUNATELY, I KNOW JUST HOW TO DEAL WITH THAT!

AMAZING WHAT A LITTLE EXTRA LEG WILL DO TO IMPROVE YOUR BOSS'S ATTITUDE! A LITTLE MORE PRACTICE AND I SHOULD HAVE HIM WRAPPED AROUND MY FINGER!

Right about that same time, in David Mitchell's office...

I'M *GLAD* YOU THINK THAT WAY, STEVEN! SHE *IS* A *REMARKABLE* YOUNG LADY! IN FACT, I HAVE A MEETING WITH HER SHORTLY AND I'LL PASS THE NEWS ALONG! TALK TO YOU SOON!

WHICH SHOULD GIVE ME **JUST** ENOUGH TIME TO TAKE MY **ADNS!** I'M SURE SHE'D **MUCH** RATHER SEE **YOUNG** DAVID FOR OUR **"MEETING!"**

DAVID...?

CELIA!
YOU'RE EARLY!
I THOUGHT...!


NO, IT'S JUST ME, DAVID! ANNIE... OR CELIA... JUST CALLED AND SAID SHE'S RUNNING A LITTLE LATE!
OH, STACY! UMMM... I CAN EXPLAIN...!

OF **COURSE** YOU CAN, DAVID! STARTING WITH WHY YOUR NEW **MYSTERY** GIRLFRIEND'S **REAL** NAME JUST **HAPPENS** TO BE THE SAME AS THE **WIFE** OF THE GUY YOU JUST **SHIPPED OFF** TO **SINGAPORE!**

IT'S **NOT** WHAT YOU THINK, STACY! **BELIEVE** ME!


THEN ENLIGHTEN ME, DAVID! TELL ME WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON!

After a long, painful explanation...

... AND NOW YOU KNOW *EVERYTHING!*

OH MY ***GOD,*** DAVID! ***HOW*** DID THIS HAPPEN? I MEAN, IT'S ONE THING FOR ***BOB VARNEY*** TO SNEAK HIS WIFE SOME OF THE ***F-RHO-DT,*** BUT SINCE WHEN DID WE HAVE THE ***CAPABILITY*** TO TURN A ***"BOB"*** INTO A ***"ROBIN"?***

WE DON'T KNOW! AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, IT WAS A **FREAK REACTION** TO THE LATEST STRAIN OF **F-RHO-DT**! THEY HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO REPRODUCE THE EFFECTS IN THE LAB SO THEY REALLY HAVE **NO WAY** OF **REVERSING** IT!

AND YOU'VE TOLD **BOTH** CELIA AND ROBIN ALL THIS?

I'VE TOLD **CELIA** AS MUCH, BUT WHAT SHE'S TOLD **ROBIN,** WELL... THAT'S BETWEEN THE TWO OF **THEM!**

ONE THING I KNOW SHE **HASN'T** TOLD ROBIN IS HOW CLOSE **YOU TWO** HAVE BECOME! I'VE KNOWN YOU A **LONG TIME,** DAVID, AND ONE THING I'VE **NEVER** KNOWN YOU TO BE IS A **HOMEWRECKER!**


IT TURNS OUT I LIKE ROBIN, AND EVEN CELIA... A LOT! SO TELL ME, DAVID... WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
I DIDN'T PLAN ANY OF THIS, STACY... I SWEAR!

WHEN I ***FIRST*** SAW CELIA... ***YOUNG*** CELIA, I WAS ***IMMEDIATELY SMITTEN!*** I COULDN'T ***HELP*** MYSELF... EVEN ***AFTER*** I FOUND OUT WHO SHE ***REALLY*** WAS! WE JUST ***NATURALLY*** GREW CLOSER AS WE WORKED ***TOGETHER*** TO HELP ROBIN!

SIGH! DAVID, DAVID, DAVID...! THE SITUATION IS **ALREADY** A **TOTAL MESS!** YOU MUST **REALIZE** THAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH **CELIA** ONLY **COMPLICATES** THINGS FURTHER! SO FAR, ROBIN HAS DONE AN **AMAZING** JOB OF ADJUSTING, BUT IF SHE **FINDS OUT** ABOUT YOU TWO...!

I KNOW... AND **YOU'RE RIGHT!** I REALLY **SHOULD** JUST STEP ASIDE AND KEEP EVERYTHING **PROFESSIONAL** BETWEEN US.

AND I'LL TELL HER THAT AS *SOON* AS SHE GETS HERE!

TELL ME *WHAT?*


AND THAT'S MY CUE TO LEAVE! TALK TO YOU LATER... CELIA!

CELIA? SHE CALLED ME CELIA! DAVID, WHAT'S GOING ON?

SIGH! I'M AFRAID STACY KNOWS EVERYTHING! SHE HAD MADE SOME ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT US THAT I NEEDED TO CLARIFY, AND THE ONLY WAY I COULD DO THAT WAS BY TELLING HER THE TRUTH!

YOU MEAN SHE KNOWS WHO **I** REALLY AM... AND **ROBIN?** MY GOD, DAVID... ISN'T THAT TAKING AN AWFUL **RISK?**

I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT **STACY!** SHE'S BETTER AT KEEPING **SECRETS** THAN ANYONE **ELSE** AROUND HERE, TRUST ME!

THERE'S SOMETHING **ELSE** THAT CONCERNS ME, HOWEVER!

WHAT **IS** IT, DAVID?

OUR... **RELATIONSHIP,** FOR LACK OF A BETTER WORD! I'VE BEEN GIVING IT SOME **SERIOUS** THOUGHT!

SO HAVE *I*, DAVID! AND I...!

PLEASE LET ***ME*** GO FIRST, CELIA, ***YOU*** HAVE BEEN THROUGH BOTH A ***PHYSICAL*** AND ***EMOTIONAL*** ROLLER COASTER THIS PAST WEEK AND A HALF!

WHICH I *COULDN'T* HAVE SURVIVED WITHOUT *YOU*, DAVID!

MAYBE... BUT, I FEEL I MAY HAVE TAKEN *ADVANTAGE* OF YOU DURING THIS *TUMULTUOUS* TIME... MADE YOU MORE *DEPENDENT* ON ME THAN WAS WARRANTED! THE OTHER DAY, FOR INSTANCE, WHEN I TOOK THE *ADNS* HERE AND WE...!


AND WE HAD THE MOST AMAZING AND FULFILLING AFTERNOON I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH I NEEDED THAT AFTERNOON, DAVID, AND I HOPE WE CAN DO IT AGAIN SOON, PREFERABLY WITHOUT THE ADNS!
YOU DO? EVEN WITHOUT THE...!

LET'S GET SOMETHING **STRAIGHT,** DAVID! WE **DO** HAVE A RELATIONSHIP... ONE THAT I HOPE WE **CONTINUE** TO DEVELOP AND **NURTURE!** THE SEX WE HAD WAS... **INDESCRIBABLE,** BUT THAT'S **NOT** THE REASON I'M DRAWN TO YOU!

YOU'VE SHOWN ME THAT YOU'RE A **STRONG,** CARING AND **COMPASSIONATE** MAN! WHAT WOMAN IN HER RIGHT MIND **WOULDN'T** BE ATTRACTED TO YOU?

AND AS FOR TAKING **ADVANTAGE** OF ME... I'M **NOT** THE NAIVE YOUNG GIRL I **APPEAR** TO BE, DAVID... **REMEMBER?** I'VE BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME, **LONGER** THAN **YOU** ACTUALLY, AND AM NOT **EASILY** FOOLED!

IN FACT **STACY** WAS CONCERNED THAT **I** WAS TRYING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF **YOU!** OF COURSE, UNTIL NOW, SHE PROBABLY THOUGHT I WAS SOME **YOUNG VIXEN** AFTER YOUR MONEY WHEN IN **REALITY** I'M JUST ONE **HOT COUGAR** WHO WANTS YOU FOR EVERYTHING **BUT** YOUR MONEY!

BUT WHAT ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR... WITH **ROBIN?**

MY RELATIONSHIP WITH ROBIN IS JUST ***THAT*** ... ***MY*** RELATIONSHIP! THE ONLY THING I ASK OF ***YOU*** REGARDING ***ROBIN*** RIGHT NOW IS TO KEEP WHAT YOU AND I HAVE A ***SECRET*** FROM HER... AT LEAST UNTIL ***I*** THINK SHE'S READY TO HEAR IT FROM ME AND ***ME ALONE!***

OF COURSE! AND, AS A MATTER OF FACT, I ***THINK*** I HAVE A WAY WE CAN ***"NURTURE"*** OUR RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT ***ANY*** DANGER OF ROBIN FINDING OUT!


REALLY? AND HOW, PRAY TELL?
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEND A FEW DAYS IN NEW YORK CITY?


NEW YORK? IT'S A LOVELY IDEA DAVID, BUT THERE'S NO WAY I CAN JUSTIFY LEAVING ROBIN RIGHT NOW TO GO OFF TO NEW YORK FOR A FEW DAYS!
THERE IS IF IT'S BUSINESS! I JUST GOT OFF THE PHONE WITH STEVEN CHAMBERS, THE BOARD PRESIDENT, WHO HAS JUST SET UP A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH SOME HIGH-STAKES INVESTORS, AND HE WANTS YOU THERE!


ME? WHY ME FOR GOODNESS SAKES?
DON'T BE SO MODEST, CELIA! YOU'RE INTELLIGENT, GRACEFUL, AND UNCOMMONLY BEAUTIFUL... THE EPITOME OF EVERYTHING OUR PRODUCTS STRIVE FOR! HE STRONGLY FEELS THAT YOU CAN WIN OVER THE INVESTORS THE WAY YOU WOWED THE BOARD!

A FEW DAYS IN NEW YORK, HMM? I DON'T SUPPOSE ***YOU'LL*** BE ANYWHERE IN THE VICINITY, WILL YOU?

HOW ABOUT THE SUITE ***RIGHT NEXT DOOR?*** I MEAN, WHAT'S AN INVESTOR'S MEETING WITHOUT THE CEO? BESIDES, I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO GET ***LOST*** IN THE CITY!


HMMM... I DON'T THINK WE'LL BE GETTING OUT AND SEEING MUCH OF THE CITY!
I TAKE IT THAT'S A "YES"!


OH, IT'S A DEFINITE "YES"... AND A HALF!

A while later...

OF COURSE DAVID... I UNDERSTAND! I'LL MAKE THE ***RESERVATIONS*** RIGHT AWAY!


HI STACY! CAN WE TALK?
SURE, BUT JUST WHO AM I TALKING TO... ANNIE MCCLURE OR CELIA VARNEY?

WELL, SINCE MY ***MIDDLE*** NAME IS ANNIE AND MY ***MAIDEN*** NAME IS MCCLURE, IT REALLY ***DOESN'T MATTER!*** WHAT ***REALLY*** MATTERS IS ***ROBIN!*** ***THAT'S*** WHAT I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT!

SINCE DAVID TOLD YOU ***EVERYTHING*** ABOUT OUR ***"SITUATION"***, I FIGURED YOU AND I NEEDED TO HAVE A ***CHAT!***

I ***AGREE!*** JUST HOW MUCH DOES ***ROBIN*** KNOW? WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO ***TELL*** HER?

WELL, I'VE WARNED HER THAT IT'S A ***DEFINITE POSSIBILITY*** SHE MAY ***NEVER*** BE A ***MAN*** AGAIN! THAT'S WHY I'M TRYING EVERYTHING I CAN TO HELP HER ***ADJUST*** AND EVEN ***ADAPT***, IF POSSIBLE!

FROM WHAT I'VE **SEEN,** I THINK SHE'S **ADAPTING** PRETTY DARN WELL! BUT ISN'T SHE **SUSPICIOUS** ABOUT ALL THE TIME **YOU'RE** SPENDING WITH **DAVID?**

I'VE TRIED MY **BEST** TO CONVINCE HER THAT IT'S ALL **BUSINESS** BETWEEN ME AND DAVID... WHICH IS **SOMEWHAT** TRUE! AND SO FAR, SHE SEEMS TO **ACCEPT** THAT!


UH-HUH! AND WHEN EXACTLY ARE YOU PLANNING ON TELLING HER THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS FOR DAVID? HOW DO YOU THINK SHE'LL TAKE THAT?
I'M SURE THIS IS JUST A FLING FOR DAVID! HE'LL LIKELY TIRE OF ME IN A WEEK OR TWO, SO THERE'S NO NEED TO TELL ROBIN ANYTHING! THE PROBLEM WILL GO AWAY ON ITS OWN... REGARDLESS OF ANY FEELINGS I MAY HAVE!


I'M NOT SO SURE, GIRLFRIEND! I'VE SEEN THE LOOK ON DAVID'S FACE WHEN HE TALKS ABOUT YOU AND IT'S NOT A "FLING" KIND OF LOOK! HE'S GOT IT AS BAD FOR YOU AS YOU DO FOR HIM!
THE FUNNY THING IS, NOW THAT I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU, I CAN SEE WHY HE FEELS THAT WAY AND WHY YOU TWO COULD BE SO GOOD TOGETHER!

IN OTHER WORDS, I **APPROVE** OF YOU TWO **CRAZY KIDS** AND HOPE THINGS WORK OUT! **I** WON'T SAY A **WORD** TO ROBIN UNTIL **YOU'RE** READY TO TELL HER!

I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, STACY! I REALLY **DIDN'T** EXPECT THIS FROM **YOU** AT ALL!

WELL, I'M JUST AN OLD ***ROMANTIC*** AT HEART AND WANT TO SEE DAVID ***HAPPY!***

THANK YOU, STACY! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW ***MUCH*** THAT MEANS TO ME!

AND, IF IT'S OKAY WITH YOU, I'D RATHER ROBIN DOESN'T FIND OUT THAT ***YOU*** KNOW OUR ***REAL IDENTITIES!*** ONE OF HER ***BIGGEST*** FEARS IS THAT SOMEONE WILL FIND OUT WHO SHE ***REALLY*** IS!

I TOTALLY UNDERSTAND! SO HOW EXACTLY ARE YOU GOING TO EXPLAIN YOUR SUDDEN TRIP TO NEW YORK? YOU'RE LEAVING THIS AFTERNOON, AFTER ALL!

I'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP PLAYING UP THE BUSINESS ANGLE AND HOPE SHE DOESN'T DWELL ON IT TOO MUCH! I'M OFF TO SEE HER RIGHT NOW!


WELL, MAEVE AND I WILL TRY AND KEEP HER MIND ON OTHER THINGS WHILE YOU'RE GONE! HAVE FUN IN NEW YORK!
THANKS, STACY! I WILL!

That afternoon, shortly after 5 PM...

SO... NOTICED YOU AND ANNIE HAVING A KIND OF ***INTENSE*** CONVERSATION TODAY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE ***OKAY*** ABOUT HER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOSS!

I AM! ACTUALLY, TO TELL THE TRUTH, WE WERE HAVING A CONVERSATION ABOUT ***ROBIN!***

ROBIN? I THOUGHT THINGS WERE GOING WELL ON THAT FRONT! WE HAD A BLAST ON FRIDAY NIGHT ONCE SHE CAME OUT OF HER SHELL! IS THERE A PROBLEM?

SIGH! ROBIN'S SELF-ESTEEM IS STILL ROCK-BOTTOM AFTER BEING DEMOTED FROM DATA ANALYST TO ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT! ANNIE DOESN'T WANT HER TO THINK THAT THE ONLY REASON SHE GOT THE JOB... AND IS KEEPING IT... IS BECAUSE CINDY AND DAVID ARE TOGETHER!

INTERESTING! I KNOW ROBIN'S TIGHTLY ***WOUND***, BUT I DIDN'T THINK SHE WAS ***THAT*** INSECURE! BUT OKAY! ***MUM'S*** THE WORD! SHE WON'T HEAR A ***PEEP*** ABOUT IT FROM ***ME!***

WE NEED TO KEEP AN ***EYE*** ON THE GIRL! ANNIE'S HEADING TO NEW YORK WITH THE BOARD TO MEET INVESTORS AND WILL BE OUT OF TOWN FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS!

SHE'S GOING TO **NEW YORK** WITH THE **BOARD? WOW!** THAT GIRL MOVES **FAST!** THE THINGS YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH IF YOU HAVE THE EAR, AMONG **OTHER** THINGS, OF THE **CEO!**

I'VE **NEVER** SEEN DAVID **THIS** WAY BEFORE! HE'S **TOTALLY** SMITTEN! ANNIE **SURE** KNOWS HOW TO WORK IT!

ANNIE SURE KNOWS HOW TO WORK *WHAT?*

UMMM... *US!* AND *GIRLS' NIGHT OUT!* SHE HAD *SUCH* A GOOD TIME THE OTHER NIGHT, SHE MADE ME PROMISE TO MAKE IT A *WEEKLY* THING! WHAT DO YOU THINK?


YEAH! I'M ALL FOR THAT! HOW 'BOUT YOU, ROBIN?
MAYBE... JUST MAYBE! DEPENDS ON HOW MY WEEK GOES AND WHEN ANNIE GETS BACK!


OH? ANNIE GO OUT OF TOWN?
YEAH! SHE'S DOING THIS... UMMMMMM... MODELING THING FOR THE COMPANY IN NEW YORK! TOOK OFF A COUPLE OF HOURS AGO AND WON'T BE BACK FOR A FEW DAYS!
WELL, YOU'VE STILL GOT US, GIRLFRIEND! THREE OUT OF FOUR IS STILL A PARTY WHENEVER YOU WANT ONE!


SO, HOW ARE MONDAYS IN THE OFFICE OF SIMON GREELEY?
NOT TOO BAD! HE WAS A LITTLE... ORNERY WHEN HE FIRST CAME IN, BUT I HAD HIM SETTLED DOWN BEFORE TOO LONG!
AND I'M SURE THAT SKIRT HAD ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH IT, DID IT?


WELL... MAYBE! JUST A LITTLE!
MAYBE NOTHING, GIRL! HE TOOK ONE LOOK AT THOSE GAMS OF YOURS AND BECAME YOUR LITTLE POODLE BOY, DIDN'T HE?

WELL I WOULDN'T SAY **THAT**, BUT THEY DEFINITELY **HELPED!**

GUESS OUR **"LESSONS"** THE OTHER NIGHT DID YOU SOME **GOOD**, EH? IF YOU EVER NEED ANY **MORE** POINTERS, JUST GIVE ME A CALL!

I **STILL** CAN'T BELIEVE THAT'S ACTUALLY **BOB VARNEY** IN THERE! HE REALLY **IS** ADAPTING!

TAKE HER UP ON THAT OFFER, ROBIN! A FEW ***MORE*** LESSONS FROM STACY AND ***SWEET LITTLE ROBIN*** WILL BE THE ***FEMME FATALE*** WHO'S RUNNING THE OFFICE!

WELL, SIMON HAS MADE IT ***PAINFULLY*** CLEAR HE WANTS A ***SEXY*** LOOKING SECRETARY! IF I PLAY MY ***CARDS*** RIGHT, IT COULD JUST ***BACKFIRE*** ON HIM!

MAYBE, HONEY! BUT BE CAREFUL! THERE'S A FINE LINE BETWEEN MANIPULATION AND TEASING! YOU NEED TO TAKE IT SLOW, FIGURE OUT WHERE THE BOUNDARY LINES ARE BEFORE YOU PUSH THINGS ANY FURTHER!

AND YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANY OF US!

I'M SURE YOU'RE RIGHT, STACY!

HELL, WHEN IT COMES TO A **POMPOUS TWERP** LIKE SIMON, THERE ARE **NO** BOUNDARY LINES! UNLIKE **THESE** TWO, **I** KNOW **EXACTLY** WHAT HE'S THINKING, SO I'LL BE ABLE TO HANDLE HIM! **NO PROBLEM!**

OF COURSE IF MOST DAYS ARE LIKE **TODAY,** I WON'T HAVE TO **WORRY** ABOUT HIM! HE WAS **GONE** ALL AFTERNOON!

MUST BE **NICE** HAVING THE BOSSES **GONE** SO MUCH! **YOURS** TAKES THE AFTERNOON OFF AND **STACY'S** HEADS OFF TO **NEW YORK** FOR A WEEK...!

MITCHELL IS IN **NEW YORK?** I... I **DIDN'T KNOW THAT!**

OH! UH, **YEAH!** STACY TOLD ME HE, UMMM... HAD SOME **BUSINESS MEETINGS** THERE!

AS CEO, HE **HAS** TO ATTEND **ALL** BOARD FUNCTIONS AND THESE ARE A WHOLE SERIES OF **MEETINGS** THIS WEEK WITH **INVESTORS!** HE ACTUALLY **HATES** GOING TO THESE THINGS... MEETINGS ALL DAY, DRINKS AND DINNERS **WITH INVESTORS** ALL NIGHT!

HE'S TOLD ME *TIME AND TIME* AGAIN HOW MUCH HE WISHES HE COULD JUST SEND *SOMEONE ELSE*, BUT THE *BOARD* WON'T LET HIM!

OH YEAH, I'M *SURE* IT'S A REAL *DRAG* BEING *FORCED* TO SPEND ALL THAT TIME IN *NEW YORK CITY*! I FEEL *TERRIBLE* FOR HIM AND *CEL*...

I MEAN *ANNIE!*

YEAH BUT...!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE ***EXCUSES*** FOR THEM! ANNIE IS A ***GROWN WOMAN*** AND ABLE TO MAKE DECISIONS FOR ***HERSELF!***

I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE SHE'S ***MARRIED*** OR ANYTHING, SO ***WHAT'S THE HARM, RIGHT?***


YOU KNOW, I'M NOT REALLY FEELING UP FOR A DRINK RIGHT NOW! I THINK I'LL HEAD ON HOME!


SEE YOU TWO TOMORROW!
SEE YOU, ROBIN!
BYE HONEY!

SHIT! I'M SORRY, STACY! I THOUGHT SHE KNEW MITCHELL WAS GOING TO BE IN NEW YORK TOO!

DON'T FEEL BAD! I THOUGHT THE SAME THING! IF YOU HADN'T SAID IT, I'M SURE I WOULD HAVE BLURTED IT OUT!

WELL, WE MANAGED TO BLOW **THAT** IN RECORD TIME! IF ROBIN WASN'T SUSPICIOUS BEFORE, SHE SURE AS **HELL** IS NOW!

I JUST HOPE SHE DOESN'T GET TOO **DOWN** ON HERSELF! WE NEED TO KEEP HER FROM DOING ANYTHING **FOOLISH** UNTIL ANNIE GETS BACK!

YEAH! ONCE ANNIE **EXPLAINS** IT, I'M SURE ROBIN WILL SEE THAT ANNIE WAS ONLY TRYING TO **PROTECT** HER! BE A GOOD FRIEND!

Later that night...

MY WORD! I'M EXHAUSTED! IS EVERY DAY GOING TO BE LIKE TODAY WAS?

I'M AFRAID SO! THESE INVESTOR'S MEETINGS CAN DRAG ON FOR HOURS AND THEN IT'S TRADITION FOR US TO WINE AND DINE THEM INTO THE WEE HOURS!


AND IF I HAVEN'T SAID IT BEFORE, LET ME SAY YOU WERE SPECTACULAR TONIGHT! YOU HAD EVERY ONE OF THE INVESTORS IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND!
WELL, THANK YOU, SIR! I JUST HOPE I CAN KEEP IT UP THE REST OF THE WEEK!


YOU KNOW I HAVE COMPLETE FAITH IN YOU, CELIA! I'M SURE YOU'LL DO JUST AS WELL IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS AS YOU DID TODAY!
I JUST HOPE A FEW HOURS OF SLEEP WILL BE ENOUGH TO GET ME THROUGH TOMORROW!


GOOD NIGHT, CELIA!
GOOD NIGHT, DAVID!








MMMMM! WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?
THE LATCH ON THE CONNECTING DOOR JAMMED! SORRY MY LOVE, BUT I'LL MAKE UP FOR IT! I PROMISE!


OH, YOU'D BETTER!









YOU, AS USUAL, WERE INCREDIBLE! AND, AS ALWAYS, INSATIABLE!

WELL, I HAVE 37 YEARS TO MAKE UP! AND I CAN'T VERY WELL COUNT ON MY "HUSBAND" TO HELP WITH THAT, CAN I?

NOT ANY MORE, THAT'S FOR SURE!

I MEAN, EVEN IF HE **WAS** STILL EQUIPPED TO DO SO, HE COULD **NEVER** FULFILL ME THE WAY **YOU** DO! FOR 37 YEARS, HIS **DISAPPOINTING** ATTEMPTS AT SEX **FRUSTRATED** ME NO END!

HE KEPT ME **ISOLATED** FROM ALL THE SEXUAL EXPERIENCES I **CRAVED**... ALL THOSE EXPERIENCES I NOW HAVE WITH **YOU!**

REALLY? ANYTHING **NEW** YOU'D LIKE TO TRY?


OH, I HAVE A FEW IDEAS...!


NO!!
CELIA!!
DON'T!!

GOD, LOOK AT ME! I'M ***DRENCHED*** IN SWEAT! CAN'T IMAGINE ***WHY***... IT'S ONLY THE ***THIRD*** TIME TONIGHT I'VE BEEN WOKEN UP BY SOME VARIATION OF THE ***SAME DAMN DREAM!***

SIGH! **FIVE AM...** IT'S NOT EVEN WORTH TRYING TO GO BACK TO SLEEP! MIGHT AS WELL GET AN EARLY START SINCE I DON'T HAVE **CELIA** AROUND TO PICK OUT MY OUTFIT OR HELP ME WITH MY MAKEUP!


BETTER GET USED TO IT, 'CAUSE THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE I'M FENDING FOR MYSELF!

GET HOLD OF YOURSELF! YOU AND CELIA HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOR 37 YEARS! SHE'S NOT GONNA THROW ALL THAT AWAY JUST FOR SOME HANDSOME AND CHARMING RICH GUY!

....

SHIT! THAT SOUNDED SO MUCH BETTER BEFORE I ACTUALLY SAID IT!

ALL RIGHT, MAYBE SHE **IS** ATTRACTED TO HIM... WHAT WOMAN **WOULDN'T** BE! MY BEST CHANCE... HELL, MY **ONLY** CHANCE AT KEEPING HER IS TO SHOW HER THAT **I'M** JUST AS **STRONG** AND **SECURE** AS **MITCHELL** IS!

THAT MEANS I'VE **GOTTA** CONVINCE HER THAT BEING A WOMAN **DOESN'T** BOTHER ME... THAT I CAN ADAPT **WITHOUT** ALL THE **COMPLAINING** AND **FOOT-DRAGGING** THAT'S BEEN PUSHING HER **AWAY** FROM ME!


I'LL BE THE BEST GODDAMN GIRLFRIEND SHE NEVER HAD! AND THEN WHEN THEY CHANGE ME BACK... AND THEY WILL... SHE'LL HAVE TO SEE ME AS THE BEST, AND ONLY MAN SHE COULD EVER WANT!
...

AND THERE'S ALWAYS MY ***ACE IN THE HOLE!*** SINCE I'VE ACQUIRED ***INTIMATE*** KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT MAKES THE FEMALE BODY ***TICK***... I'LL BE ABLE TO USE THAT KNOWLEDGE TO DRIVE CELIA ***WILD!*** SHE'LL ***NEVER*** FIND A BETTER ***LOVER*** THAN THE ***NEW, IMPROVED*** BOB VARNEY!

Later that morning...

WELL, WELL, WELL...***WHAT'S THIS?*** IT'S OKAY FOR ***ME*** TO BE A HALF HOUR LATE... ***I'M THE BOSS!*** BUT WHERE'S MY FETCHING ***"GIRL-FRIDAY"?***


HMMM... SOME INTERESTING PUNISHMENTS COME TO MIND!


OH YEAH!
NOW THAT'S THE KIND OF VIEW THAT MAKES ALL THE OFFICE BULLSHIT WORTHWHILE!


WELL, HERE YOU ARE! COMING IN EARLY TO IMPRESS THE BOSS, HUH?!
ACTUALLY, COMING IN AT THE REGULAR TIME TO MAKE SURE THE BOSS GETS HIS WORK DONE TODAY!


SEVERAL OF YOUR MEETINGS WERE RESCHEDULED SO I WAS PUTTING AN UPDATED COPY ON YOUR DESK... AND BRINGING YOU YOUR COFFEE!

YOU'RE **WELCOME,** MR. GREELEY!


ROBIN, WAIT A MINUTE!
YES, MR. GREELEY?


I'VE BEEN KIND OF A *CREEP* TO YOU THE LAST FEW DAYS, HAVEN'T I?
I DON'T KNOW THE *SAFE* WAY TO ANSWER THAT, SIR!

I'LL TAKE THAT AS A **YES!** I JUST WANTED TO SAY THAT **I'M SORRY** FOR MY BEHAVIOR! I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO **EXPECT** WHEN YOU WERE ASSIGNED TO ME BUT YOU'VE **PROVEN** YOURSELF TO BE AN **AMAZING** ASSISTANT!

WELL... **THANK YOU**, MR. GREELEY!

AND TO SHOW MY **APPRECIATION** FOR THE **GREAT** JOB YOU'RE DOING, I GOT YOU A SMALL GIFT! IT'S NOTHING **MAJOR**... JUST SOMETHING FOR YOUR DESK!

YOU **DIDN'T** HAVE TO DO THIS! **REALLY!**

IT'S JUST A **SCENTED CANDLE!** I KNOW THESE ROOMS CAN GET A LITTLE **ANTISEPTIC** AT TIMES! IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE SCENT, LET ME KNOW AND I'LL REPLACE IT!

NO, IT... IT SMELLS **WONDERFUL,** MR. GREELEY!


I WASN'T EXPECTING ANYTHING LIKE THIS FROM YOU, BUT... THANK YOU!
MY PLEASURE, ROBIN!

WOW! I KNEW THIS OUTFIT WOULD HAVE AN EFFECT ON HIM, BUT THIS JUST BLOWS ME AWAY! I REALLY DIDN'T THINK HE'D BE THIS EASY TO MANIPULATE!

OOOOOO

HE ACTUALLY SEEMED CONTRITE! MAYBE I'VE MISJUDGED HIM AND HE ISN'T REALLY AS SLIMY AS I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT! WHATEVER THE CASE, I GET THE FEELING THAT LIFE'S GOING TO BE A LOT EASIER AROUND HERE FROM NOW ON!

oooo

Later that afternoon...

WOW! LOOK AT THE PECS ON THAT GUY! IS HE CHISELED OR WHAT? WOOF!

OH MY GOD, **LISTEN** TO ME! GETTING ALL **HOT** AND **BOTHERED** FROM THESE PICS OF **ADNS-ENHANCED HARD-BODIES!**

IT'S ALL **CELIA'S** FAULT! IF SHE HADN'T **RAVISHED** ME WITH THAT **STRAP-ON** THE OTHER NIGHT, I'M SURE I'D **NEVER** BE HAVING **THESE** KIND OF THOUGHTS!


BUT, JESUS... WHAT THOUGHTS!

SAY ROBIN, ARE YOU DONE **PROOFING** THOSE **ADNS PRESENTATIONS** YET?

UMMM, YEAH... JUST FINISHING UP, MR. GREELEY! THERE WERE JUST A FEW **SPELLING ERRORS** TO CLEAN UP, THAT'S ALL!


SUPER! MR. MITCHELL NEEDS THESE IN NEW YORK ASAP, SO CAN YOU EMAIL THEM TO HIM AS WELL AS PRINT OFF HARD COPIES AND FAX THEM TO HIM?
OF COURSE, MR. GREELEY!


WHAT WOULD I DO WITHOUT YOU, ROBIN?
OH, IF YOU HAD TO I'M SURE YOU'D FIND SOME HOT LITTLE THING FROM THE SECRETARIAL POOL TO DO MY JOB AT HALF MY SALARY!


MAYBE! BUT SHE WOULDN'T BE YOU, ROBIN!
THAT'S... SWEET, MR. GREELEY!

SNIFF! THAT'S AN... *INTERESTING* COLOGNE YOU'RE WEARING! SOMETHING *NEW?*

OH, JUST ANOTHER OF THE *MINOR* PRODUCTS R&D IS CRANKING OUT AND ASKING SOME OF THE *STAFF* TO TRY!


WHAT DO YOU THINK?
LIKE I SAID, IT'S... INTERESTING!


WELL... I'D BETTER GO SEND THOSE FAXES!


PHEW! I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY PUT IN THAT COLOGNE, BUT I DON'T SEE HOW HE CAN STAND IT! JUST A COUPLE OF SECONDS FOR ME AND I'M FEELING A LITTLE WOOZY!

A while later, after a visit to the fax machine...

HEY YOU, WAIT UP!

HUH? OH, HI STACY! SORRY I DIDN'T SEE YOU! I'M KIND OF SPACING OUT TODAY! WHAT'S UP?

JUST STOPPING BY TO SEE HOW YOU WERE DOING! BUT ONE LOOK AT YOU IN ***THIS OUTFIT*** TELLS ME YOU ***MUST*** BE DOING PRETTY WELL! YOU LOOK ***AMAZINGLY*** HOT!

THANKS! I LIFTED IT FROM ***ANNIE'S*** CLOSET! I FIGURE IF ***SHE*** GETS TO SPEND THE WEEK ***CAVORTING*** IN NEW YORK, ***I*** GET ***FREE ACCESS*** TO HER CLOTHES!

LOOK ROBIN, I WANTED TO MAKE ***SURE*** YOU WEREN'T STILL ***UPSET*** ABOUT LAST NIGHT! WE BOTH THOUGHT YOU ***KNEW*** DAVID WOULD BE GOING TO NEW YORK ALSO BECAUSE IT ***IS*** A ***BUSINESS*** TRIP!

OH, I'M ALL ***OVER*** THAT! LIKE I SAID LAST NIGHT, SHE'S A ***BIG GIRL*** AND CAN DO WHAT SHE WANTS! AND IT'S UP TO US ***GIRLS*** TO SUPPORT HER, ***RIGHT?***


UMM... YEAH! THAT'S RIGHT! WOW, THAT'S VERY OPEN-MINDED OF YOU... CONSIDERING!
CONSIDERING? CONSIDERING WHAT?

OH CRAP! INSERT FOOT IN MOUTH!

OH, JUST CONSIDERING HOW CLOSE YOU TWO ARE, THAT'S ALL!

UH-HUH! JUST HOW CLOSE DO YOU THINK WE ARE, STACY?

OH... WELL, I JUST MEANT THAT YOU TWO HAVE A ***HISTORY***... YOU'VE BEEN TOGETHER, I MEAN YOU'VE ***KNOWN*** EACH OTHER FOR SO LONG...!

STACY... THIS IS THE ***FIRST*** TIME I'VE ***EVER*** SEEN YOU AT A LOSS FOR WORDS! WHAT THE ***HELL*** DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ***ME AND ANNIE?***


I... I...!
SIGH! I KNOW EVERYTHING!


WHAT DO YOU MEAN... EVERYTHING?
EVERYTHING... MEANING I KNOW "ANNIE" IS REALLY CELIA VARNEY... YOUR WIFE... BOB!

OH MY GOD! HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN? AND WHO THE HELL TOLD YOU?

I JUST FOUND OUT **YESTERDAY** AND IT WAS **ONLY** BECAUSE I HAD **DAVID** BACKED INTO A CORNER SO HE **HAD** TO TELL ME!

MITCHELL?! THAT SON OF A BITCH PROMISED HE WOULDN'T TELL ANYONE!

IT'S NOT HIS FAULT, ROBIN! I'D ALREADY FIGURED OUT WHO ANNIE REALLY WAS AND THOUGHT HE'D SENT YOU OFF SO HE COULD BE WITH YOUR WIFE!

HE ONLY TOLD ME THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU TO KEEP ME QUIET! AND I HAVE BEEN! I HAVEN'T TOLD A SOUL... NOT EVEN MAEVE!

YOU'LL **FORGIVE** ME IF I HAVE A LITTLE **TROUBLE** TAKING THAT AT **FACE VALUE!** IT SEEMS **EVERYONE** I KNOW HAS BEEN MAKING AND **BREAKING** A LOT OF **PROMISES** LATELY!

SO IF YOU DON'T **MIND**, I'M JUST GOING BACK TO **MY** DESK AND BE **ALONE**... BECAUSE THAT'S PRETTY MUCH HOW I **FEEL!** TOTALLY AND **COMPLETELY ALONE!**

BUT ROBIN...!


NICE WORK, STACY! I SHOULD PROBABLY GO AFTER HER, BUT SHE'S RIGHT... SHE NEEDS SOME TIME ALONE! MAYBE SHE'LL LISTEN TO ME TOMORROW!

JESUS! HE TOLD STACY! HIS SECRETARY! JUST TO COVER HIS OWN ASS! GOD! I AM SUCH AN IDIOT!

oooo

HEY ROBIN, DID YOU GET THOSE FAXES...?

WHOA, YOU LOOK UPSET! WHAT'S WRONG?

OH, **NOTHING!** *SNIFF!* JUST SOME... **GOSSIP** THAT GOT UNDER MY SKIN A LITTLE! I'M **OKAY,** THOUGH!

ARE YOU **SURE?** ANYTHING **I** CAN DO?

NO! *SNIFF!* I'M FINE, **REALLY!** *SNIFF!* NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, BUT **THANKS** FOR OFFERING!

WELL, OKAY! BUT **REMEMBER**, I'M JUST INSIDE THIS DOOR IF YOU NEED ANYTHING! SOMEONE TO **TALK** TO... A **SHOULDER** TO CRY ON... **WHATEVER!**

THANK YOU, MR. GREELEY! I **REALLY** APPRECIATE THAT!


YOU KNOW, I THINK I'D PREFER "SIMON" FROM NOW ON, OKAY, ROBIN?
OKAY..., SIMON!


ALL RIGHT THEN! WHEN YOU GET A CHANCE, WOULD YOU CALL MITCHELL'S HOTEL ROOM AND LET HIM KNOW THE FAXES ARE WAITING FOR HIM! I PUT THE NUMBER ON YOUR DESK!
OF COURSE, SIMON!

I'LL SEND THOSE FAXES ***AFTER*** I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO CALM DOWN! WOULDN'T BE A SMART MOVE TO BITE THE HEAD OFF THE ***CEO***, WHICH IS PROBABLY WHAT I'D DO IN MY ***CURRENT*** STATE OF MIND!

.....

FUNNY HOW PEOPLE CAN TURN OUT TO BE EXACTLY THE ***OPPOSITE*** OF WHAT YOU EXPECT!

MITCHELL COMES ACROSS AS AN HONEST, CARING PERSON WITH INTEGRITY, WHEN IN ***REALITY*** HE'S A ***CHICKEN-SHIT, LYING BASTARD*** WHO'S TRYING TO ***BANG MY WIFE*** BEHIND MY BACK!

AND THEN THERE'S **SIMON**... WHO I WAS SO **SURE** WAS A **SLIMY, SELF-CENTERED MANIPULATOR**, BUT IN REALITY TURNS OUT TO BE A VERY **SWEET AND CARING** MAN!

I **NEVER** THOUGHT I'D SAY THIS, BUT I'M **LUCKY** TO HAVE **HIM** AS A BOSS!


OKAY, GUESS I'M CALMED DOWN ENOUGH TO CALL MITCHELL! MAYBE I'LL BE LUCKY AND JUST HAVE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE!
YES, ROOM 752 PLEASE!


HELLO?
CELIA?!


click!!

...and in a New York hotel room...

HMPH! MUST'VE BEEN A WRONG NUMBER!


WELL THAT'S HARDLY FAIR! THE VIEW FROM YOUR BALCONY IS MUCH BETTER THAN THE VIEW FROM MINE!
WELL, FEEL FREE TO STOP BY AND ENJOY THE VIEW ANYTIME YOU WANT!


I'LL TAKE THAT AS A STANDING INVITATION!
I WAS COUNTING ON IT!


NOW C'MON! YOU PROMISED ME A NIGHT ON THE TOWN!
THAT, AND SO MUCH MORE, MY DEAR!


SAY ROBIN, AFTER YOU CALL MITCHELL...!
ROBIN?! MY GOD, GIRL, WHAT'S WRONG?


THAT DOES IT... COME WITH ME!


NOW YOU JUST SIT THERE AND RELAX.! I'LL MAKE SURE NO ONE DISTURBS YOU! HANG ON A SEC AND I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

SIMON, I'M SO **SORRY** I'VE MADE SUCH A **SPECTACLE** OF MYSELF! I SHOULD **NEVER** HAVE LOST IT LIKE THAT! IT **WON'T** HAPPEN AGAIN, I PROMISE!

DON'T **WORRY** ABOUT IT, ROBIN. THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS IS **YOU'RE** OKAY! CAN I ASK WHAT HAPPENED TO **UPSET** YOU SO MUCH? DID SOMEONE COME IN OR **CALL...?**


NO... NO ONE CAME IN! I WAS JUST... WELL, I TRIED CALLING MR. MITCHELL, AND... I WAS ALREADY EMOTIONAL ABOUT THE GOSSIP AND IT MUST'VE BEEN A WRONG NUMBER AND...!

OH NO! YOU TRIED CALLING MITCHELL... AND SHE ANSWERED THE PHONE, DIDN'T SHE?

SHE? YOU MEAN, YOU KNOW ABOUT MITCHELL AND... AND ANNIE?


SIGH! I'VE... I'VE GOT A CONFESSION TO MAKE, ROBIN!
OH GOD! MITCHELL TOLD YOU TOO, DIDN'T HE? JESUS! WHO DOESN'T KNOW?!


YES ROBIN, I DO KNOW ABOUT YOU AND YOUR WIFE, CELIA, AND HOW OUR F-RHO-DT TURNED YOUR LIVES INSIDE OUT! BUT DAVID DIDN'T TELL ME ANYTHING... I FIGURED IT OUT ON MY OWN!
GOD, I FEEL SO STUPID! HERE I AM PRANCING AROUND IN THIS OUTFIT ACTING LIKE SOME LITTLE NYMPH WHEN YOU'VE KNOWN ALL ALONG WHO I REALLY AM!

AND WHY ***SHOULDN'T*** YOU ACT LIKE THAT? BECAUSE THAT'S ***EXACTLY*** WHAT YOU ARE... A BEAUTIFUL, YOUNG WOMAN! ***I*** SHOULD KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ***ANYONE!***

WHY? WHY WOULD ***YOU*** "KNOW" THAT?

BECAUSE **F-RHO-DT** IS **MY** PROJECT! I **KNOW** THE EXTENT OF ITS EFFECTS ON WOMEN... AND THEREFORE ON YOU! DAVID TOLD ME THERE WAS A **MALE** SUBJECT WHO HAD **ACCIDENTALLY** TAKEN THE NEW FORMULA, AND ASKED ME TO **SPEARHEAD** THE EFFORTS TO FIND AN **ANTIDOTE!**

WHEN **"ROBIN"** SUDDENLY SHOWED UP TO TAKE OVER **"BOB'S"** JOB, IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO FIGURE THE **REST** OUT!


SO YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF FINDING THE ANTIDOTE? HOW LONG WILL IT BE UNTIL YOU DEVELOP ONE?
YOU MEAN DAVID DIDN'T TELL YOU?
APPARENTLY DAVID HASN'T BEEN TELLING ME A LOT OF THINGS!

I HAD THE RESEARCHERS WORKING ***TWENTY-FOUR/SEVEN*** ON THE PROBLEM! THEY SCRUTINIZED YOUR ***BLOOD SAMPLES,*** MICRO-ANALYZED THE ***F-RHO-DT*** SAMPLE, DID EVERYTHING THEY ***POSSIBLY*** COULD AND REACHED THE UNFORTUNATE CONCLUSION THAT ***THERE IS NO ANTIDOTE!***

NONE? BUT... MAYBE SOMEDAY...?

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU WAS A FLUKE THAT'S BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO REPRODUCE IN THE LAB! EVERY TEST THEY'VE RUN CONCLUDES THAT YOU ARE NOW AND WILL REMAIN A BEAUTIFUL, VIVACIOUS WOMAN!

SO, IT'S **NOT** JUST FOR MONTHS OR MAYBE **YEARS**... IT'S **FOR GOOD?**

YOU MAKE THAT SOUND LIKE A **BAD** THING! **I'VE** ACCEPTED YOU AS A WOMAN EVER SINCE I **FIRST** LAID EYES ON YOU OUTSIDE DAVID'S OFFICE! EVEN DISCOVERING WHO YOU **USED** TO BE HAS DONE **NOTHING** TO CHANGE MY VIEWS ABOUT YOU!


THE WAY I SEE IT, YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN AN AMAZING GIFT! A NEW LIFE THAT YOU'VE ALREADY BEGUN TO ACCEPT AND EMBRACE!
IT'S ALSO A LIFE YOU CAN FLOURISH IN IF YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR YOU... AND ARE NOT AFRAID TO BE HONEST WITH YOU!

I GUESS I'VE JUST BEEN ***FOOLING*** MYSELF, THINKING I WOULD, OR ***COULD*** GO BACK TO MY OLD LIFE SOMEDAY! BUT THAT'S ***NOT*** GOING TO HAPPEN, IS IT? IT'S TIME TO ***ACCEPT*** THE FACT THAT I AM ***ROBIN GLEASON*** FROM HERE ON OUT!

THAT'S RIGHT! ***BOB VARNEY IS*** AN ***OLD MAN*** WHO'S BEEN ***LOST AND FORGOTTEN*** IN SINGAPORE! BUT ***ROBIN GLEASON*** HAS HER ***WHOLE LIFE*** AHEAD OF HER TO DO WITH AS SHE WILL... WITH ***WHOEVER*** SHE WANTS!


BUT ALL THE PEOPLE I KNOW, EVERYONE WHO I THOUGHT CARED ABOUT ME, YOU'VE ALL BEEN LYING TO ME, LAUGHING AT ME BEHIND MY BACK!
I'VE NEVER LAUGHED AT YOU! FAR FROM IT! EVER SINCE ROBIN CAME TO BE, SHE'S BEWITCHED AND ENTRANCED ME COMPLETELY!

OOOH... THERE'S THAT **COLOGNE** AGAIN! BUT IT'S NOT MAKING ME WOOZY... IT'S MORE OF A BUZZ... A **GOOD BUZZ!**

REALLY?

PERFECT! THE INTERACTION OF THE CHEMICALS IN MY **"COLOGNE"** WITH THE **PHEROMONE-LACED** CANDLE SHE'S BEEN SNIFFING ALL DAY HAVE TURNED HER **RESISTANCE** TO **MUSH!**

OH MOST **DEFINITELY!** TELL ME, ROBIN... DO YOU **ENJOY** BEING A **WOMAN?**

WHY DO I FEEL *SO COMFORTABLE* AROUND HIM? LIKE I CAN TELL HIM *ANYTHING?*

I... I *DO*! I FEEL LIKE I'VE *ALREADY* LEARNED TO *ACCEPT* AND EVEN *LIKE* BEING A WOMAN!

I CAN TELL! THE WAY YOU *HOLD* YOURSELF, THE WAY YOU *MOVE*... ACT AND *REACT*! IT'S VERY *FEMININE*... AND *SENSUAL!*

TIME TO MOVE IN FOR THE *KILL!*

MMMM... WHEN HE *TOUCHES* ME LIKE THAT... I'VE *NEVER* FELT THIS WAY BEFORE!

WELL, I'VE... I'VE *TRIED* TO... *WANT* TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MY NEW... *UMMM...!*

YOUR NEW *BODY!* IT'S AN *AMAZING* PIECE OF WORK AND YOU MANAGE TO CARRY IT *EXQUISITELY!*

TELL ME, ROBIN.. JUST HOW MUCH HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED... AS A WOMAN? HOW FAR HAVE YOU TAKEN IT?

IF YOU'D SEEN THE WAY I MOUNTED CELIA THE OTHER NIGHT, YOU'D KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT!

YOU MEAN.. HAVE I HAD SEX YET...? YES, BUT... BUT NOT WITH A MAN! I MEAN...!


OH GOD! I'M LOSING CONTROL, BUT... BUT I DON'T CARE!
OH, I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU MEAN! IT MEANS YOU'VE BEEN EXPERIMENTING, SEEING WHAT FEELS GOOD! EITHER BY YOURSELF OR WITH A... PARTNER... MAYBE YOUR... ROOMMATE!


OHHHHHHH!
SO YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH THIS... FINGERS CARESSING YOUR WARM, SLIPPERY SEX!

GOD! AM I REALLY GONNA LET HIM DO THIS?

MAYBE YOU'VE EVEN EXPERIENCED SOMETHING A LITTLE LARGER... AND RIGID, HMMM?

UMMMM.... YES! I... WE... DID! OHHHH!

I CAN TELL HOW MUCH YOU MUST'VE ENJOYED THAT!


SO, YOU HAVEN'T HAD A WARM COCK PENETRATE YOU YET, HAVE YOU? CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW THAT MUST FEEL?
GOD! IF YOU'RE GOING TO FUCK ME, JUST DO IT ALREADY!


JUST WAITING FOR THE LADY TO ASK!
IS THIS ENOUGH OF AN INVITATION FOR YOU?


OHHHHH!
WADDYA THINK OF MY RSVP, BABY?


OHHH... JESUS!!
YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT YOU'D SAY!


WHA... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
YOU'LL SEE...!

YOU...YOU'RE NOT **QUITTING** ARE YOU?

AND LEAVE THE DESERVING LADY **UNFULFILLED?** NOT ON **MY** WATCH!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

METHINKS THE LADY DOTH APPROVE!


OHHHH THE LADY DOES! MOST DEFINITELY!

Later... after violating every inch of the conference table...

JESUS! THAT WAS SOOO MUCH BETTER THAN... THAN...!

THAN YOUR LITTLE SEX TOYS? OF COURSE! I'M A LIVING, BREATHING PARTNER WHO RESPONDS TO YOUR BODY... AND YOUR NEEDS! COLD HARD PLASTIC CAN'T DO THAT!


I CAN'T BELIEVE I... I LET YOU DO THIS! THE LAST THING I EXPECTED WAS THAT I... THAT WE... I DON'T KNOW WHAT POSSESSED ME!
I DO!

I COULD FEEL IT THE **SECOND** YOU CAME INTO MY OFFICE... THE **CONNECTION**... THE **ELECTRICITY!** IT WAS **INEVITABLE!** ALL IT TOOK WAS FOR YOU TO FINALLY **LET GO** OF WHO YOU **USED** TO BE AND **EMBRACE** THE **WOMAN** YOU'RE DESTINED TO BECOME!

AND WHAT **KIND** OF WOMAN DOES THIS MAKE ME, HUH? ONE WHO **BANGS** HER **BOSS** BEHIND LOCKED OFFICE DOORS?

IT MAKES YOU A WOMAN WHO TOSSES ASIDE THE ***RULES*** TO GET WHAT SHE WANTS! WHEN ***YOU*** WANTED THE ***F-RHO-DT***, YOU DIDN'T GO BY THE RULES AND ASK FOR IT... YOU JUST ***TOOK IT***... NOT ONCE, BUT ***TWICE!*** I CAN ***RESPECT*** THAT!

OH YOU ***CAN***, CAN YOU? AND ***WHY*** IS THAT?


BECAUSE YOU'RE JUST LIKE ME! NOT AFRAID TO TAKE WHAT YOU WANT REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES!
OH REALLY? AND JUST WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?

BESIDES **YOU?** JUST **THE COMPANY!** I'M GOING TO TAKE IT RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER **DAVID MITCHELL'S NOSE!** AND **YOU'RE** GOING TO HELP ME GET IT!

ME? ASSUMING YOU **COULD** PULL THAT OFF... HOW COULD **I** POSSIBLY HELP?

WE NEED TO KEEP MITCHELL ***OFF-BALANCE*** AND ***DISTRACTED*** WHILE ***I*** WORK ON MY LITTLE ***COUP!*** BESIDES BEING EXTREMELY DISTRACTING IN YOUR ***OWN*** RIGHT, YOU ALSO HAVE AN... ***INTIMATE*** RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ***MAIN OBJECT*** OF HIS ATTENTION!

CONSIDERING YOUR CURRENT ***FEELINGS*** TOWARD THOSE TWO, I DON'T THINK IT WOULD BE ***TOO*** DIFFICULT FOR A ***WOMAN LIKE YOU*** TO KEEP THEIR ***DRAMA-LEVEL*** HIGH, SO DAVID'S TOO ***BUSY*** TO SEE WHEN I SLIP THE ***KNIFE*** IN HIS BACK AND ***TAKE OVER*** DM INDUSTRIES!


HMMM! THAT SOUNDS MORE THAN JUST A LITTLE... DEVIOUS...!


OHHHH!


IT SOUNDS DOWNRIGHT UNDERHANDED...!


OHHH... JESUS!!


MMMMM!
SO... WHEN DO
WE START...?



A Tangled Web

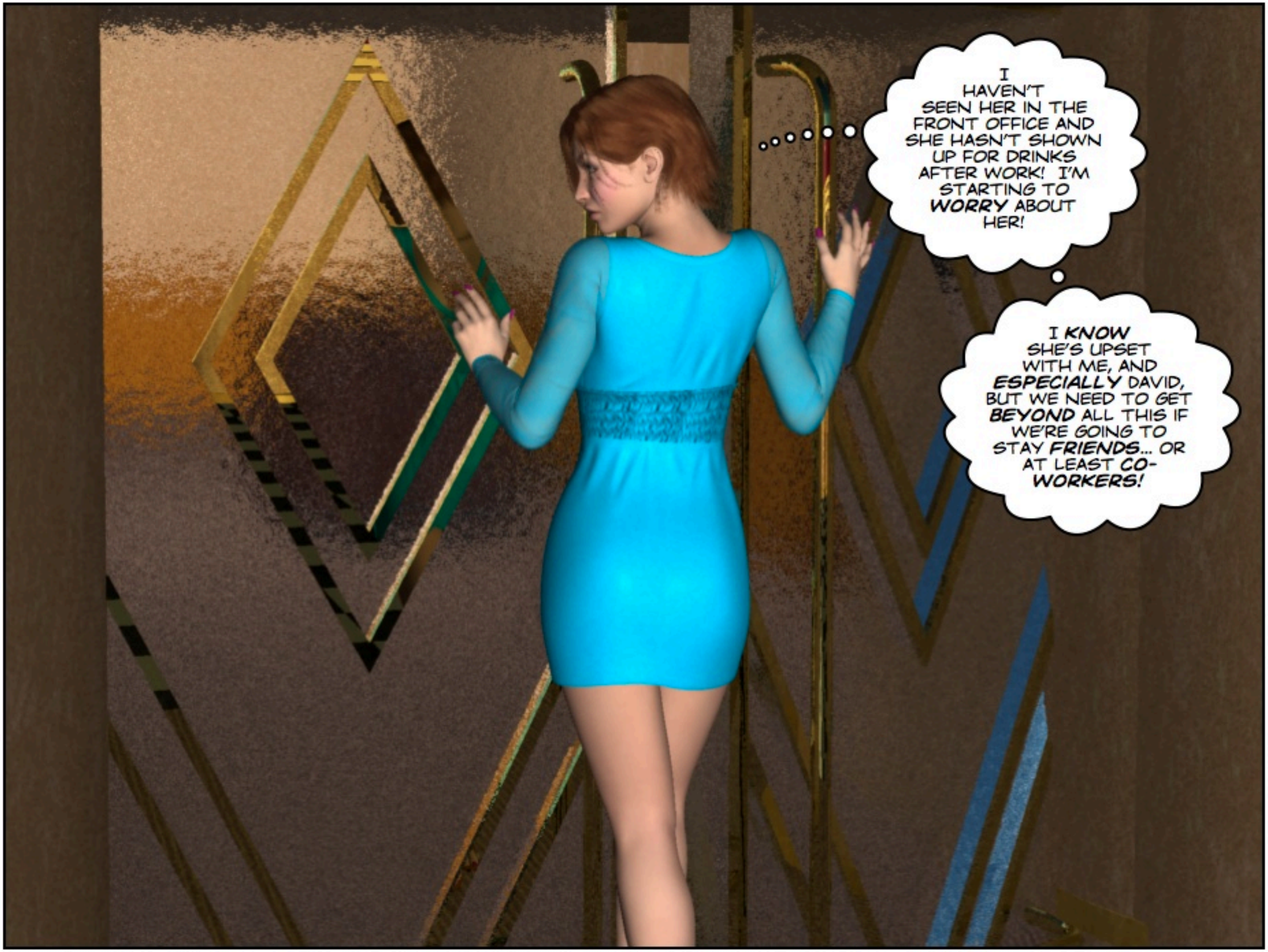
Chapter Eight

by CBlack

A few days later...

I PROMISED MYSELF I'D GIVE ROBIN ALL THE TIME SHE NEEDS TO CALM DOWN ON HER ***OWN*** BEFORE I TRIED TALKING TO HER AGAIN, BUT IT'S BEEN ***THREE DAYS!***

.....


I HAVEN'T SEEN HER IN THE FRONT OFFICE AND SHE HASN'T SHOWN UP FOR DRINKS AFTER WORK! I'M STARTING TO WORRY ABOUT HER!
I KNOW SHE'S UPSET WITH ME, AND ESPECIALLY DAVID, BUT WE NEED TO GET BEYOND ALL THIS IF WE'RE GOING TO STAY FRIENDS... OR AT LEAST CO-WORKERS!

HMMM... NOT HERE! **SIMON** MUST HAVE HER OFF DOING SOMETHING! HOPE HE'S NOT **WORKING** HER **TOO HARD!**

MAYBE I SHOULD LEAVE HER A FRIENDLY LITTLE NOTE... LET HER KNOW I'M *STILL* HER *FRIEND!*

SNIFF! MMMM... THAT *CANDLE* SMELLS *WONDERFUL!* I'LL HAVE TO ASK HER WHERE SHE GOT IT... *IF* SHE'S STILL *SPEAKING* TO ME!

STACY?


ROBIN!
I WAS JUST LEAVING YOU A NOTE, AND I...!


ROBIN? WOW! I ALMOST DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU!
YOU LIKE? I GOT TIRED OF THE PONYTAIL LOOK, SO I FINALLY BROKE DOWN AND WENT TO A SALON! MAN, I FINALLY GET IT! I'VE NEVER BEEN SO PAMPERED BEFORE IN MY LIFE!


WELL I'M GLAD YOU LIKED IT 'CAUSE YOU LOOK GREAT!
THANKS! I FEEL PRETTY GREAT, TOO!

I'M SO **GLAD!** AFTER OUR **TALK** THE OTHER DAY, I DIDN'T KNOW WHEN OR **IF** YOU'D EVER BOUNCE BACK!

OH, I'M SO **OVER** THAT! I ADMIT, I **DID** MOPE AROUND **PISSED** AT EVERYONE FOR A DAY OR TWO, BUT THAT WAS JUST THE **LAST LITTLE BIT** OF GRUMPY OLD **BOB VARNEY** BEING AN **ASSHOLE!**

BUT ONCE I **FINALLY** ADMITTED TO MYSELF THAT **BOB IS GONE** AND HE'S **NEVER** COMING BACK, WELL... ALL THE **BITTERNESS** DISAPPEARED AND **ROBIN** JUST **BLOSSOMED!**

I'M SO **HAPPY** FOR YOU, HONEY! AND IF YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING, I THINK I'M GOING TO LIKE THE **"NEW"** ROBIN EVEN **MORE!** THIS **NEW LOOK** YOU'VE GOT GOING IS **SMOKIN'!** THAT **SKIRT** IS JUST **SCANDALOUS!**

I KNOW, ***RIGHT?*** AND IT'S ***PERFECT*** FOR ***YOU-KNOW-WHO!*** IF HE STARTS GETTING TOO ***BOSSY,*** ALL I HAVE TO DO IS BEND OVER ***JUST*** A LITTLE BIT AND HIS ***EYES POP*** AND HE ***FORGETS*** WHAT HE WAS SAYING!

WOW! I WOULD DEFINITELY USE ***THAT*** MOVE... ***SPARINGLY!***

I'VE GOT HIM EATING OUT OF THE PALM OF MY HAND... JUST LIKE ***YOU*** TAUGHT ME AT ***CLUB PARADOX*** LAST WEEK!

WE SERIOUSLY NEED ANOTHER ***GIRLS' NIGHT OUT!*** CELEBRATE THE END OF A ***ROUGH*** WEEK AND INTRODUCE THE ***"NEW" ROBIN*** TO THE WORLD!

YOU KNOW, I WAS THINKING THAT ***VERY SAME THING!*** YOU TELL ***MAEVE,*** I'LL CALL ***CELIA*** AND WE'LL MEET AT THE CLUB AROUND ***NINE*** TONIGHT!


HAVE YOU TALKED TO CELIA AT ALL THIS WEEK?
BRIEFLY... EARLIER THIS WEEK, BUT I TALKED TO HER AGAIN THIS MORNING! SHE AND DAVID SHOULD BE BACK THIS EVENING... PLENTY OF TIME FOR HER TO MEET US AT THE CLUB!


SO... DID SHE TELL YOU ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT HER TRIP?
OH, SHE TRIED TO AVOID THE JUICY DETAILS, BUT I COULD TELL SHE AND DAVID HAD A GREAT TIME TOGETHER!


AND THAT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU?
NOT ANY MORE! REMEMBER, CELIA WAS MARRIED TO BOB VARNEY, WHO... LIKE I SAID... IS GONE! BUT ROBIN AND CELIA ARE BFFS! I ONLY WANT WHAT'S BEST FOR HER!


WOW! I DON'T THINK YOU WILL EVER CEASE TO AMAZE ME, ROBIN!
OH, I GUARANTEE THAT, STACY!

HMMM... THE ONLY THING **MISSING** IN THIS SCENARIO IS **ME** IN THE MIDDLE! ANY TAKERS?

UGH! THAT'S A LITTLE **CRUDE,** EVEN FOR **YOU,** SIMON!

YEAH BOSS! **BEHAVE,** OR I GO BACK INTO **PANTSUITS!**


HEAVEN FORBID WE CHEAT THE WORLD OF THOSE LOVELY LEGS OF YOURS, MY DEAR!
SO STACY, WE HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE! WHAT BRINGS YOU TO OUR NECK OF THE WOODS?
JUST VISITING ROBIN AND... *SNIFF!*...


OH MY GOD, SIMON! WHAT ARE YOU WEARING?
JUST THE LATEST COLOGNE... GUARANTEED TO DRIVE THE LADIES WILD! NOT THAT I NEED ANY HELP!


WHEW! MAYBE DRIVE THEM INTO THE ER WITH BRAIN DAMAGE FROM THOSE FUMES! CAN'T YOU SMELL THAT, ROBIN? HOW CAN YOU STAND IT?
ACTUALLY, I KIND OF LIKE IT! BUT MAYBE I'M JUST USED TO IT! WORKING CLOSE WITH HIM ALL DAY, YOU KNOW!

YOU KNOW, IF **YOU** WORKED DOWN HERE WITH **US**, I'M SURE **YOU'D** GET TO LOVE IT TOO... **JUST LIKE ROBIN!** DAVID DOESN'T **APPRECIATE** YOU **NEARLY** AS MUCH AS **I** WOULD!

MAYBE **NOT**, BUT HE SURE **PAYS** A HECK OF A LOT BETTER! YOU'D HAVE TO OFFER SOME PRETTY SERIOUS **"PERKS"** TO COMPENSATE!


OH, I THINK YOU'D FIND MY PERKS PRETTY SERIOUS AND VERY SATISFYING!
REALLY? WELL, THAT'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO... I MEAN... I...!
OH, GOD! WHAT AM I DOING?!


I... I THINK I NEED TO GET BACK OUT FRONT! SEE YOU TONIGHT, ROBIN!
YEAH... SEE YOU, STACY!


JESUS! WAS I JUST FLIRTING WITH SIMON? ONE SECOND I'M FEELING NAUSEOUS FROM HIS ATROCIOUS COLOGNE AND THE NEXT I'M ALMOST FAWNING OVER HIM! WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ME?
.....

I WONDER... COULD THERE BE SOMETHING IN HIS COLOGNE THAT MADE ME ACT LIKE THAT? I WOULDN'T PUT IT PAST HIM!

THAT SON OF A BITCH HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET INTO MY PANTIES EVER SINCE HE STARTED WORKING HERE!

BUT ROBIN DIDN'T SEEM BOTHERED BY IT! I WONDER WHY?

MAYBE I'LL ASK **MAEVE** TO DO A QUICK **"FLY-BY"** OF SIMON... SEE IF **SHE** NOTICES ANYTHING OR NOT! BECAUSE THERE'S NO WAY **I'M** GOING NEAR HIM AGAIN UNTIL I KNOW **ONE WAY** OR THE **OTHER!**

.....


SO WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
HMMM... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?


THAT BIT WITH STACY... TRYING TO GET HER TO COME WORK WITH US? YOU KNOW THAT'D NEVER WORK OUT! SHE'S TOO TIGHT WITH DAVID! THERE'S NO WAY SHE'D GO ALONG WITH WHAT WE'RE PLANNING!
I'M JUST MESSING WITH HER! YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW HOW LONG SHE AND I HAVE BEEN TRADING BARBS LIKE THAT!


OR MAYBE YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO SHARE ME WITH ANYONE... IS THAT IT?
OH PLEASE! GET OVER YOURSELF, BOSS MAN!

AWWW! YOU'RE *SO CUTE* WHEN YOU'RE ***JEALOUS***... AND ***HORNY!*** DON'T WORRY, BABE... OUR LITTLE ***"PARTNERSHIP"*** IS JUST A ***TWOSOME!***

FINE! AND I'M ***NOT*** JEALOUS!

OKAY, BUT I NOTICED YOU ***DIDN'T*** DENY THE ***HORNY*** PART! ***OOOO...*** AND I CAN SEE ***WHY!*** REST ASSURED, BABY... ***YOU*** ARE THE ***HOTTEST*** PIECE OF ASS AROUND... AND YOU'RE ***ALL MINE!***

HOW COULD I STAY ***PISSED*** WHEN YOU COMMAND SUCH ***SUAVE POETRY!***

MMMMMMM... AND WHY THE ***HELL*** DO I ***BOTHER*** WEARING ***PANTIES*** AROUND YOU ***ANYWAY?***


MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY!
OOOOO! WAIT! DID YOU LOCK THE DOOR?


YOU REALLY WANT ME TO STOP AND GO CHECK?
OH, GOD! DON'T YOU DARE!
OF COURSE NOT, BABY! I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU LOVE MY COCK!


IN FACT, WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME... TELL ME HOW MUCH YOU LOVE IT! HOW YOU'LL DO ANYTHING FOR ME TO GET IT!
I... I WILL! ANYTHING... ANYTHING YOU WANT FOR MORE... MORE...!


OH... GOD! I LOVE YOUR COCK!


MMMMMMMM....!
ANYTHING.....!
THAT'S MY GIRL!

That evening at Club Paradox...

CELIA!
OVER HERE!

HI STACY! THANKS FOR KEEPING ME POSTED ABOUT ROBIN! I'M SORRY SHE GOT SO **ANGRY** WITH YOU, BUT IT **WASN'T** YOUR FAULT! IT'S **HARD** TO KEEP QUIET WHEN YOU KNOW SUCH A **BIG SECRET!**

WELL, I **PRIDE** MYSELF ON MY **DISCRETION,** SO I WAS FEELING PRETTY **GUILTY** FOR AWHILE THERE, BUT I'M **MUCH** BETTER NOW THAT ROBIN HAS **FORGIVEN** ME!


SO... HOW WAS NEW YORK?
WONDERFUL! IT WAS MY FIRST VISIT EVER AND DAVID SHOWED ME EVERYTHING! WELL... EVERYTHING HE COULD IN FOUR DAYS!

EVEN THE *BUSINESS* PART OF THE TRIP WAS INTERESTING! THE *PEOPLE* WE DEALT WITH... SO MUCH *MONEY* AND *POWER!*

IT WAS A LITTLE *INTIMIDATING* AT FIRST, BUT DAVID SEEMS TO THINK I HAVE A *KNACK* FOR DEALING WITH PEOPLE LIKE THAT!

UH-HUH! THE *CITY* WAS WONDERFUL, THE *MEETINGS* WERE WONDERFUL, BUT... HOW WAS YOUR TIME *ALONE* WITH *DAVID?*

SIGH! AT THE RISK OF SOUNDING REDUNDANT... *WONDERFUL!* I THOUGHT MY SEX LIFE WITH BOB WAS PRETTY GOOD DURING THE FIRST YEAR OR TWO OF OUR MARRIAGE! AND OUR VERY LAST NIGHT, BEFORE HE BECAME ROBIN, WAS TRULY *AMAZING,* BUT *STILL*... IT JUST *DOESN'T COMPARE!*

DAVID JUST... TAKES MY *BREATH* AWAY! SEXUALLY AND EMOTIONALLY!

I'M SO **THRILLED** FOR THE **BOTH** OF YOU! IF YOU CAN MAKE HIM AS HAPPY AS HE'S **OBVIOUSLY** MADE YOU, WELL... YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW **MUCH** THAT MEANS TO ME! DAVID'S HAD A RUN OF BAD CHOICES, **ROMANCE-WISE**, IN HIS LIFE! BUT I TRULY BELIEVE **YOU** ARE THE **BEST** AND **LAST** WOMAN FOR HIM!

YOU REALLY **DO** CARE ABOUT HIM, DON'T YOU? ARE YOU **SURE** THERE'S NO **HISTORY** BETWEEN YOU TWO?


WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR A LONG TIME, BUT NOTHING ROMANTIC, TRUST ME!
SOUNDS KIND OF LIKE THE LAST TWENTY YEARS OF MY MARRIAGE! BOB AND I STARTED OFF STRONG, BUT THE ROMANCE FADED AS QUICKLY AS HIS OPTIMISM!


BOB MAY HAVE PUT IN LONG HOURS AT DM, BUT HE WAS NEVER A HARD WORKER! HE ALWAYS LOOKED FOR THE EASY WAY OUT! AND WHEN THOSE SHORTCUTS DIDN'T PAN OUT, WHICH IS WHAT HAPPENED MOST OF THE TIME, HE'D GET SO ANGRY! DISAPPOINTED WITH HIMSELF, HIS MARRIAGE AND THE WORLD!


OF COURSE, I SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN *TOO* MUCH, BECAUSE IT WAS ONE OF THOSE LITTLE *SHORTCUTS* OF HIS WHICH PUT US ALL WHERE WE ARE *TODAY!* AND... I'VE *NEVER* BEEN HAPPIER!

I'M HOPING THE SAME WILL BE TRUE FOR ROBIN, THAT THIS ***FRESH START*** WILL GIVE HER A NEW, MORE ***OPTIMISTIC*** OUTLOOK ON LIFE. IS SHE HERE YET?

OH, ***SHE'S HERE!*** AND ***MAEVE*** TOO! THEY'RE OUT ON THE DANCE FLOOR... ***SHAKIN'*** THEIR ***MONEY-MAKERS!***


I SHOULD PROBABLY WARN YOU THAT ROBIN HAS, UMMM... "ADAPTED" A BIT MORE WHILE YOU WERE GONE!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


WELL... SEE FOR YOURSELF!
I SEE MAEVE, BUT WHERE'S...?


OH MY GOD!


IS THAT REALLY MY ROBIN OUT THERE? IN THAT SKIMPY LITTLE OUTFIT? DANCING WITH... MEN?
IT SEEMS ROBIN TOOK OUR LITTLE LESSONS FROM LAST WEEK TO HEART AND HAS DECIDED TO EMBRACE HER NEW LIFE... WITH GUSTO!

MY GOODNESS! I... I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT I'M SEEING! I NEVER DREAMED ROBIN WOULD EMBRACE HER NEW LIFE QUITE SO... ENTHUSIASTICALLY!

I KNOW IT'S UNSETTLING, BUT THINK ABOUT IT! ROBIN'S NEW-FOUND ACCEPTANCE SIMPLIFIES THINGS FOR YOU AND DAVID!

REALLY? HOW SO?

ROBIN IS ***REINVENTING*** HERSELF, AND PART OF THAT PROCESS IS ***REDEFINING*** HER RELATIONSHIP WITH ***YOU!*** IN HER WORDS, SHE'S ATTEMPTING TO GO FROM ***HUSBAND TO BFF!***

THE ***GOOD*** NEWS IS, SHE'S AWARE OF THE FACT THAT YOU AND DAVID HAVE GOTTEN ***CLOSER,*** AND SHE SEEMS ***OKAY*** WITH IT!

REALLY?

YEP! SHE TOLD ME SHE'S ACTUALLY HAPPY FOR YOU TWO!

SERIOUSLY? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! THAT'S SO UNLIKE... BOB!

EXACTLY! DON'T YOU SEE? SHE'S TRYING TO FORGET BOB AND CONCENTRATE ON BEING ROBIN!


WELL, I THINK SHE MAY BE TRYING A BIT TOO HARD!


DON'T MAKE ANY SNAP JUDGEMENTS, CELIA, PLEASE! ROBIN'S TRYING TO FIND HERSELF... DISCOVER WHAT MAKES HER HAPPY!
SIGH! AND THAT'S WHAT MATTERS MOST, OF COURSE!


YOU'RE BACK! YAY!! AND YOU LOOK GREAT! NEW YORK OBVIOUSLY AGREES WITH YOU!
THANKS HONEY! AND YOU LOOK... HOT! VERY HOT!


REALLY? YOU DON'T THINK IT'S A BIT TOO MUCH, DO YOU?
HONEY, "TOO MUCH" IS NOT HOW I'D DESCRIBE THAT NEW OUTFIT OF YOURS!


WELL IF IT MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE, ONLY THE TOP IS NEW... THE SKIRT IS YOURS!
OH... IT IS, ISN'T IT?


YOU HAVE SO GOT TO COME OUT ONTO THE DANCE FLOOR! IT IS A GAS!
OH, I COULDN'T POSSIBLY DANCE LIKE THAT!
SERIOUSLY? HONEY, IF I CAN, YOU SURE AS HELL CAN!


WE'RE GONNA GO RELOAD AT THE BAR! BUT WHEN WE GET BACK, YOU'RE DANCING! PERIOD!

WHAT... ON EARTH WAS THAT? WHO... WAS THAT? SHE'S ALMOST A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON!

YEAH, ROBIN'S BECOME QUITE THE LITTLE FIRECRACKER, HASN'T SHE? DEFINITELY A LOT MORE FUN TO PARTY WITH IF YOU ASK ME!

I THINK SHE'S JUST **SOWING** SOME **WILD OATS** IN HER NEW ENVIRONMENT! YOU KNOW... NEW, TOWN, NEW JOB, NEW FRIENDS! I WOULDN'T **WORRY** ABOUT HER TOO MUCH!


REALLY? YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW HOW... UNUSUAL THIS IS FOR HER, STACY!
I KNOW! BUT I THINK THIS IS JUST A PHASE! GIVE ROBIN SOME TIME AND SHE'LL SETTLE DOWN!

I HOPE YOU'RE ***RIGHT,*** STACY! BUT WHILE SHE'S IN THIS ***PHASE,*** I THINK I OUGHT TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH HER TO MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T GET TOO ***CARRIED AWAY!***


OKAY, ROOMIE! TIME TO GET YOU OUT THERE SHAKIN' YOUR GROOVE THING!
REALLY ROBIN, I DON'T THINK...!

C'MON, HOT STUFF! LET'S BLOW THIS PLACE!

LATER, BABY! PROMISE! BUT ONLY IF YOU'RE A GOOD BOY 'TIL THEN!

OH GO ON, ANNIE! A GROOVE THING LIKE YOURS JUST BEGS TO BE SHAKEN! I'LL EVEN LEND YOU LANCE HERE FOR ARM CANDY!

THE PLEASURE WOULD BE ALL MINE, GORGEOUS!


SIGH! FINE! IT'S OBVIOUS I'M OUTNUMBERED AND OUTGUNNED! I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT!


NOW THAT WE FINALLY HAVE A CHANCE TO TALK... DID YOU GET A CHANCE TO CHECK OUT SIMON LIKE I ASKED?
YEAH, I MADE A POINT OF WALKING BY HIM WHEN HE WAS IN THE LOBBY, GABBING WITH SOME OF HIS PALS! BUT I DIDN'T SMELL ANYTHING LIKE WHAT YOU DESCRIBED! NADA!

WHAT?! YOU'RE KIDDING! I COULD SMELL HIM TEN FEET AWAY... AND IT WAS MAKING ME SWOON! HOW COULD YOU NOT SMELL ANYTHING?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT JUST TO MAKE SURE, I WENT DOWN TO HIS OFFICE AND TALKED TO ROBIN FOR AWHILE! WHILE I WAS THERE, HE CAME IN AND THIS TIME I COULD DEFINITELY SMELL WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT!


I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS, BUT YOU'RE RIGHT... IT ALMOST KNOCKED ME OFF MY FEET!
BESIDES BEING DIZZY, DID YOU FIND YOURSELF ACTING DIFFERENTLY? ESPECIALLY TOWARD SIMON?

YOU KNOW, I **WAS** AWFULLY GIGGLY AND ALMOST **FLIRTY** WITH THE SLIMEBALL! **EWWW!**

MAYBE HE PUT **MORE** ON BETWEEN THE TWO TIMES **YOU** SAW HIM?

MAYBE, BUT **THAT** DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY **YOU** SMELLED IT AND **I** COULDN'T... AT LEAST NOT UNTIL I WENT TO HIS OFFICE! I'M THINKING HE'S GOT SOMETHING **THERE** THAT'S BOTH PUNGENT... **AND POWERFUL!**

OH MY GOD, IF IT IS SOMETHING IN THAT OFFICE, THEN POOR ROBIN'S BEEN EXPOSED TO IT ALL DAY LONG! YOU THINK IT'S JUST A COINCIDENCE THAT SHE'S SUDDENLY VERY BUBBLY, GIGGLY AND... EXUBERANT, SHALL WE SAY?

HELL NO! THE GIRL WAS A TOTAL WALLFLOWER LAST WEEK AND LOOK AT HER NOW!


LOOK, I KNOW TOMORROW'S SATURDAY, BUT WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO MEET ME AT THE OFFICE AND DO A LITTLE SLEUTHING OVER THE WEEKEND?
IF IT'S TO HELP ROBIN? HELL YEAH!

Later... as the hour grows late and the crowd thins...


SO, YOU FINALLY READY TO GET OUT OF HERE, BABE?
JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES... THEN I'M ALL YOURS!


THERE YOU ARE! I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!
PERFECT TIMING, CELIA!
WELL, WE'VE BEEN RIGHT HERE... CHATTING! WHAT'S UP?


WHAT'S UP? IT'S TIME TO GO! THE PLACE IS CLOSING! MAEVE AND STACY LEFT HOURS AGO AND I'M EXHAUSTED!


YOU EXHAUSTED, BABE?
MMMM...! NOT HARDLY! WHAT DID YOU HAVE IN MIND?


I THINK WE HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA WHAT HE HAS IN MIND! SAY GOODNIGHT, ROBIN!
AWWW! YOU'RE NO FUN!


WHAT IN THE WORLD WERE YOU DOING BACK THERE? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED IF I HADN'T FOUND YOU?
OH, I HAVE A REAL GOOD IDEA... AND I WAS COUNTING ON IT!


WHAT?! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS! YOU ACTUALLY WANTED TO LEAVE WITH THAT GUY AND... AND...!
AND GET LAID? DAMN STRAIGHT!


I'M NOT EXACTLY A VIRGIN, YOU KNOW... YOU SAW TO THAT! BUT YOU'VE BEEN GONE ALL WEEK AND YOUR SELECTION OF TOYS JUST ISN'T QUITE ENOUGH ANYMORE!
I'M READY FOR THE REAL DEAL!


I... I UNDERSTAND YOUR FRUSTRATION AND YOUR NEEDS, ROBIN! I REALLY DO! BUT... NOT LIKE THIS! A PICK-UP IN A NIGHTCLUB? YOU DESERVE BETTER THAN THAT!
MAYBE! BUT WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS? I REALLY DON'T SEE MYSELF GETTING INTO ANY KIND OF A RELATIONSHIP! NOT LIKE YOU AND DAVID, AT LEAST!


WH... WHAT DO YOU MEAN? ME AND DAVID? WE'RE NOT... IT'S NOT WHAT YOU...
STOP IT, CELIA! I MAY HAVE BEEN IN DENIAL FOR AWHILE, BUT NOT ANYMORE! I KNOW YOU AND DAVID ARE LOVERS! AND THE FUNNY THING IS, I'M OKAY WITH IT! REALLY!


SO, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED IT OUT, I'VE ACCEPTED THE WAY THINGS ARE! I'M ROBIN GLEASON NOW... AND NOT YOUR HUSBAND, BOB VARNEY!
THE WAY I SEE IT, WE'RE TWO HOT YOUNG WOMEN READY TO TAKE ON THE WORLD, AND IF THAT LEADS US IN SEPARATE DIRECTIONS... SO BE IT!


WOW! YOU REALLY HAVE COME TO TERMS WITH EVERYTHING, HAVEN'T YOU?
I THINK SO!

I *HEAR* WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, THAT WE MAY EVENTUALLY GO IN *SEPARATE* DIRECTIONS, BUT FOR NOW, LET *ME* BE YOUR GUIDE. *PLEASE!* I'D HATE TO SEE YOU *RUIN* YOUR NEW LIFE BECAUSE OF SOME *IMPULSIVE DECISIONS!*

I'LL AGREE... AS LONG AS YOU CAN *KEEP UP* WITH ME! HAVING THIS BODY IS LIKE HAVING A *GREAT NEW TOY* THAT I REALLY, *REALLY*, *REALLY* WANT TO PLAY WITH!


OH, I UNDERSTAND, HONEY! THANK GOODNESS IT'S THE WEEKEND, BECAUSE I HAVE A FEELING WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET MUCH SLEEP TONIGHT!
PROBABLY NOT! *GIGGLE!*
OOO... CAN WE TAKE TURNS WITH THE STRAP-ON?

The very next evening...

NOW YOU'RE ***SURE*** YOU'RE OKAY WITH ME GOING OUT WITH ***DAVID*** TONIGHT?

CELIA, I **TOLD** YOU I'M OKAY WITH IT AND I **MEANT** IT! NOW YOU TWO **HAVE FUN!**

WELL, **OKAY!** I WON'T BE OUT **TOO** LATE!


I SHOULDN'T BE EITHER, BUT... WHO KNOWS?
WHOA! WHERE ARE YOU GOING DRESSED LIKE THAT?


CLUB PARADOX! IT'S LADIES' NIGHT, REMEMBER?
OH, SO STACY AND MAEVE ARE GOING WITH YOU, RIGHT?
WELL... I LEFT THEM BOTH VOICEMAILS, BUT NEITHER ONE GOT BACK TO ME!


YOU'RE NOT GOING BY YOURSELF, ARE YOU?
WHY NOT? I'M A BIG GIRL! I AGREED THAT YOU COULD BE MY GUIDE... BUT NOT MY KEEPER!


YOU CAN'T GO OUT ON YOUR OWN DRESSED LIKE THAT! NOT YET! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? YOU'RE GOING OUT WITH DAVID AND I DON'T KNOW WHERE STACY AND MAEVE ARE! I REALLY WANT TO GO OUT TONIGHT! I'LL BE GOOD, I PROMISE!
JUST A FEW DRINKS AND SOME DANCING! I ALREADY CALLED A CAB!

SIGH! I **REALLY** DON'T HAVE THE ENERGY TO GO **CLUBBING!** HOW ABOUT I **CANCEL** WITH DAVID AND WE **STAY IN** TONIGHT TOGETHER!

I KNOW IT WON'T BE AS **EXCITING,** BUT WE COULD MAKE SOME **POPCORN** AND WATCH A ROMANTIC **MOVIE!**

ARE YOU **KIDDING?** I'VE **ALREADY** WASTED TOO MANY NIGHTS OF MY LIFE ON **THAT COUCH** WITH YOU **NODDING OFF** HALFWAY THROUGH SOME **BORING MOVIE!**

I **PROMISE** I WON'T FALL ASLEEP, HONEY, BECAUSE I'M **NOT** THE **OLD LADY** I USED TO BE! YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME! **TRUST ME!**

I'M GOING TO CALL DAVID; AND THEN SLIP INTO SOMETHING I BOUGHT IN **NEW YORK,** SOMETHING I **KNOW** YOU'LL LIKE! SOUND GOOD?

OH, I DON'T *THINK SO...* ROOMIE!

Honk Honk!!

PERFECT TIMING, CABBIE! YOU JUST EARNED YOURSELF A HEFTY TIP!

CAB'S HERE! SAY "HI" TO DAVID FOR ME! DON'T WAIT UP!


WHAT'D YOU SAY, ROBIN? ROBIN?!
OH NO! SHE DIDN'T!

I'M **SORRY,** DAVID, BUT WE'LL HAVE TO **POSTPONE!** I DON'T HAVE TIME TO EXPLAIN, BUT I NEED TO BE WITH **ROBIN** RIGHT NOW! I'M SORRY! I'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW!

A few days later...


WELL, GOOD MORNING, MR. MITCHELL! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
WELL...GOOD MORNING YOURSELF, ROBIN! MY, YOU CERTAINLY LOOK FETCHING TODAY!


WHY THANK YOU, SIR! THAT'S AWFULLY SWEET OF YOU! SHOULD I LET MR. GREELEY KNOW YOU'RE HERE?


THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, ROBIN! I KNOW THAT VOICE ANYWHERE! COME ON IN, DAVID!
THANKS, SIMON! IT WAS GOOD SEEING YOU AGAIN, ROBIN!


YOU TOO, MR. MITCHELL! DON'T BE SUCH A STRANGER!

WOW! I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT IS THE SAME PERSON I SENT TO YOU A WEEK AGO! CONSIDERING HER BACKGROUND, THE CHANGE IS TRULY ASTOUNDING!

WELL, I CAN'T TAKE ALL THE CREDIT! SHE'S A REMARKABLE YOUNG LADY! BUT... YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT HER BACKGROUND? ANYTHING I NEED TO BE CONCERNED WITH?

NO, NO... OF *COURSE* NOT! I'D HAVE TOLD YOU IF THERE WAS!

YEAH, *SURE* YOU WOULD, YOU *OLD FART!*

....

SO, WHAT CAN I *DO* FOR YOU, DAVID? NEED A *REFILL* ON THE *ADNS* TO KEEP UP WITH THAT *SEXY* YOUNG THING YOU'RE SEEING?

ACTUALLY, **THAT'S** NOT THE PROBLEM! **SHE** ACTUALLY SEEMS TO PREFER ME **AS IS**... THE MATURE, **DISTINGUISHED** VERSION!

REALLY? WELL, THEN YOU'RE A **VERY** LUCKY MAN TO HAVE FOUND SUCH A **GEM!** SO, IF IT'S NOT ABOUT YOUR LADY FRIEND, THEN WHAT **ELSE** CAN I DO FOR YOU? DON'T TELL ME IT'S ACTUALLY **BUSINESS RELATED!**

ACTUALLY, IT *IS* ABOUT MY YOUNG LADY... *ANNIE* IS HER NAME! NORMALLY I WOULDN'T *DREAM* OF IMPOSING MY PROBLEM ON YOU, BUT IT SEEMS TO INVOLVE *YOUR* SECRETARY!

ROBIN? HOW SO?

WELL, ANNIE AND ROBIN ARE OLD ***COLLEGE*** FRIENDS AND THEY'VE BEEN ***ROOMMATES*** SINCE ROBIN MOVED TO TOWN!

I WASN'T ***AWARE*** OF THAT! SO ***THAT'S*** HOW YOU MET HER, HUH?

UMMM, YES... **THAT'S** HOW! ANYWAY, SINCE ANNIE AND I GOT BACK FROM NEW YORK SEVERAL DAYS AGO, WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO **SEE** EACH OTHER BECAUSE ANNIE HAS BEEN **PRE-OCCUPIED** TRYING TO REIN IN **ROBIN'S** NEWLY DEVELOPED **PARTY-GIRL ATTITUDE!** AN ATTITUDE ANNIE DESCRIBES AS BORDERLINE **SELF-DESTRUCTIVE!**

SELF DESTRUCTIVE? MY ROBIN? I... I FIND THAT **HARD** TO BELIEVE, DAVID!

THEN I TAKE IT YOU ***HAVEN'T*** NOTICED ANY OF THESE ***BEHAVIORS*** IN HER!

FAR FROM IT! FROM WHAT I CAN TELL, SHE'S A HAPPY, ***WELL-ADJUSTED*** YOUNG LADY WHO SEEMS TO TRULY ***LOVE*** HER LIFE AND HER ***JOB!*** THE PERSON YOUR ***ANNIE*** IS DESCRIBING DOESN'T SOUND LIKE ***ROBIN*** AT ALL! I ***HATE*** TO SAY THIS, BUT ARE YOU ***SURE*** SHE'S TELLING YOU THE ***WHOLE TRUTH?***

THAT'S WHAT I WAS HOPING **YOU** COULD HELP ME FIND OUT, BUT IF YOU **HAVEN'T** NOTICED ANYTHING, THEN I'LL JUST HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT ON MY OWN! I THOUGHT I COULD... BUT NOW I'M NOT SO SURE! **THANKS** FOR YOUR TIME, SIMON!


WAIT A MINUTE, DAVID! MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING I CAN DO!
LIKE WHAT?

A FEW DAYS AGO, ROBIN SENT ME AN ***INVITATION*** TO ACCESS HER ***FACEPLACE*** PAGE! AT THE TIME I THOUGHT IT BEST TO ***NOT*** ACCEPT SINCE I PREFER TO KEEP PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS ***SEPARATE!*** BUT, IN ***THIS*** CASE... FOR ***YOU...!***

OH...WOW!

WHAT IS IT?

WELL, IT SEEMS YOUR ANNIE WAS TELLING THE *TRUTH* IN AT LEAST *ONE* REGARD!

WHICH WAS...?

OUR SWEET LITTLE **ROBIN** IS QUITE THE **PARTY GIRL** AFTER ALL! SEE FOR YOURSELF!

Robin Gleason

Robin Gleason

Timeline About Photos 10 Friends 16 Mutual More

About

Concierge at Hyatt Grand Champions
Mar 1996 to present

Studied at Golden West Junior College and San Diego State
Past: Topeka West High

Lives in Palm Desert, California

From Torrance, California

Photos 10

Post Photo

Write something...

Robin Gleason changed her cover photo.
August 29 at

Mitchell Pozer, Jerry Johnson, Chris Pierce and 4 others like this.

Natalie Haupin Pretty girl!

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MY LORD! I HAD NO IDEA SO MANY OF OUR FEMALE EMPLOYEES WERE SUCH WILD CHILDS! IT'S A VERITABLE "GIRLS OF DM INDUSTRIES GONE WILD!"

AND IT LOOKS LIKE ANNIE IS WITH HER IN PRETTY MUCH EVERY PICTURE! BUT WHO...?

GASP!

DAVID? WHAT'S WRONG?

Me, my BFF, and our favorite well-hung studs at Club Paradox!

OH...!

LOOK DAVID... MAYBE IT'S NOTHING! JUST BLUSTERY, ONLINE EXAGGERATIONS! IT DOESN'T MEAN ANNIE IS AS MUCH A PARTY-GIRL AS ROBIN!

I KNOW, BUT... IT'S JUST VERY DIFFICULT TO SEE HER OUT ENJOYING HERSELF... WITH SUCH YOUNG MEN... ENJOYING HERSELF!

SHE'S OBVIOUSLY **YOUNG AND SPIRITED,** BUT WITH A LITTLE SHOT OF **ADNS,** YOU COULD BE RIGHT THERE **WITH** HER! WHAT'S **STOPPING** YOU?

THAT KIND OF ENVIRONMENT HAS NEVER HELD ANY **INTEREST** FOR ME! I THOUGHT ANNIE WAS A **DIFFERENT SORT** OF PERSON, **THAT'S** ALL!

BESIDES, I WOULDN'T WANT HER TO THINK I WAS **SPYING** ON HER.!

THEN *HERE'S* WHAT YOU DO...! NEXT TIME THE GIRLS GO OUT, *YOU* POP A LITTLE *ADNS*, SLIP INTO THE CLUB AND WATCH *DISCREETLY* FROM A DISTANCE!

ANNIE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO'S SEEN YOU ON *ADNS*, ISN'T SHE?

OF COURSE!

GOOD! THEN YOU JUST HAVE TO KEEP OUT OF **HER** SIGHT FOR A WHILE! IF **NOTHING'S** GOING ON, YOU SIMPLY SHOW UP AND TELL HER YOU'RE THERE TO **HELP** HER KEEP AN EYE ON ROBIN!

HECK, IF YOU PLAY IT RIGHT, YOU COULD **STILL** KEEP YOUR IDENTITY A **SECRET** FROM THE **OTHER** GIRLS!

I DON'T KNOW, SIMON! IT SOUNDS A LITTLE... **SNEAKY!**

SOMETIMES WE *HAVE* TO BE A LITTLE SNEAKY TO GET WHAT WE *WANT!* YOU WANT *ANNIE,* DON'T YOU?

MORE THAN *ANYTHING!*

THEN *THAT'S* WHAT YOU NEED TO CONCENTRATE ON! AND I TRULY BELIEVE *THIS* IS THE BEST WAY OF *ASSURING* THAT HAPPENS!

YOU MAY BE RIGHT! I **DESPISE** BEING **SUSPICIOUS**, BUT... I CAN'T HELP MYSELF! I **NEED** TO KNOW THE **TRUTH!**

TELL YOU WHAT, **I'LL** KEEP MY EARS OPEN AND IF I HEAR **ROBIN** MAKING ANY **PLANS** FOR GOING OUT, I'LL LET YOU KNOW **FIRST THING!**


I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR HELP, SIMON!
OH, IT'S MY PLEASURE, DAVID! ANYTHING FOR YOU!


THANK YOU AGAIN, SIMON!
ANYTIME, DAVID!


GOODBYE, ROBIN! I'LL TRY NOT TO BE SUCH A STRANGER FROM NOW ON!
BETTER NOT! BYE MR. MITCHELL!

SO...? HOW'D IT GO?

PERFECT! KEEPING CELIA AWAY FROM HIM WITH YOUR **"SELF DESTRUCTIVE" BEHAVIOR** WAS ENOUGH TO GET HIM GOOD AND **DISTRACTED,** BUT THOSE **PICTURES** YOU POSTED WERE **SHEER GENIUS!** THE IDEA THAT SHE MIGHT BE **SCREWING AROUND** HAS HIM **CLIMBING THE WALLS!**


JUST DOING MY PART! AND IF I HAVE TO GO CLUBBING EVERY NIGHT TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN, WELL... *SIGH!* IT'S A BURDEN I'M WILLING TO UNDERTAKE!

GOOD! BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING OUT AGAIN TONIGHT, BUT THIS TIME ALONE!

ALONE? WITHOUT CELIA? WHAT GOOD WILL THAT DO US?


MY PARTNERS HAVE ALREADY STARTED BUYING UP ALL THE DM STOCK AND ALL THEY NEED IS A FEW MORE DAYS!
IF YOU CAN PULL OFF WHAT I HAVE PLANNED FOR TONIGHT, IT'LL TOTALLY BLOW DAVID MITCHELL'S MIND! HE'LL BE SO FAR GONE HE WON'T BE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON MUNDANE MATTERS SUCH AS RUNNING HIS COMPANY UNTIL IT'S FAR TOO LATE!



A Tangled Web

Chapter Nine

by CBlack

That evening, back at the girls' apartment...

YOU KNOW, YOU HAVEN'T SAID ***ONE WORD*** ABOUT GOING OUT TONIGHT! DOES THAT MEAN WE'RE ACTUALLY ***STAYING IN*** FOR A CHANGE?

YEAH, I GUESS THE EXCITEMENT AND ALLURE OF THE ***FAST LANE*** HAS STARTED WEARING ***THIN!***


UH-HUH! NO ONE ELSE WANTED TO COME OUT AND PLAY, DID THEY!
NO! THE WIMPS!


WELL, I KNOW IT'S NOWHERE NEAR AS EXCITING AS YOU'D LIKE IT TO BE, BUT I FOR ONE REALLY APPRECIATE THE DOWN TIME!

I'M **SORRY** IF I'VE BEEN A LITTLE **CRAZY** LATELY, BUT I THINK I MIGHT **FINALLY** BE GETTING IT OUT OF MY SYSTEM!

HERE'S YOUR TEA!

I HOPE THAT'S **TRUE**, HONEY, BECAUSE **FRANKLY** YOU'RE WEARING ME OUT!


WELL, I PROMISE YOU'LL GET A LOT OF REST TONIGHT!

A few minutes later...

ALL RIGHT! EVERYTHING'S **GO** ON THIS END! SHE SHOULD BE **OUT** UNTIL MORNING! I'VE ALSO TURNED HER PHONE OFF AND STASHED IT, **JUST IN CASE!**

GOOD JOB, BABE! I CALLED MITCHELL EARLIER AND TOLD HIM I OVERHEARD YOU MAKING PLANS TO MEET UP WITH THE GUYS AT **CLUB PARADOX** TONIGHT! SO KEEP YOUR EYES OUT FOR HIM!


HOW WILL I KNOW WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE ON ADNS?
I JUST SENT YOU HIS PICTURE!

OOOO! HUBBA HUBBA! NO WONDER CELIA HAS IT BAD FOR HIM!

IT'S ALL UP TO YOU FROM HERE ON OUT! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO, DON'T YOU, BABE?


OH YEAH! I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I HAVE TO DO!


That night at Club Paradox...
SO, THIS IS THE PLACE ROBIN AND CELIA HAVE BEEN SPENDING THEIR EVENINGS LATELY! IT'S ALL I EXPECTED... AND SO MUCH LESS!

I **STILL** HAVEN'T SPOTTED EITHER OF THE GIRLS YET! THAT'S NOT **SURPRISING** THOUGH, GIVEN THE CROWD! IT'S **WEDNESDAY** FOR CRYING OUT LOUD! DON'T THESE PEOPLE HAVE TO **WORK** TOMORROW?

.....

I'M ASSUMING THEY'RE HERE ***SOMEWHERE!*** I TRIED CALLING CELIA EARLIER BUT ALL I GOT WAS HER ***MESSAGE*** SERVICE! MAYBE THEY'VE BEEN HERE AND ***GONE*** ALREADY! IF ***THAT'S*** THE CASE, THEN I'M ***WASTING MY TIME!***


I'LL GIVE IT A FEW MORE MINUTES, BUT IF I DON'T SPOT THEM SOON, I'M LEAVING AND...!


OH, I'M SO SORRY! I...!


THEN AGAIN, NO I'M NOT! HI THERE! I'M ROBIN!
UMMM... HI! I'M, UH... MITCH! NICE TO MEET YOU, ROBIN!
MY WORD! SHE'S PRACTICALLY FALLING OUT OF THAT DRESS!


YOU TOO! SO, YOU HERE WITH ANYONE... MITCH?
NO, BUT... I WAS HOPING TO MEET SOMEONE HERE!


WELL YOU HAVE, HANDSOME... ME! SO NOW WHAT?
HEH-HEH! THAT'S NOT EXACTLY WHAT I MEANT! DON'T GET ME WRONG! YOU'RE AN EXTREMELY LOVELY YOUNG LADY!


WHY THANK YOU!
BUT, UMMM... I WAS LOOKING FOR SOMEONE IN PARTICULAR!


OH! I SEE! WELL, MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU FIND THIS SOMEONE IN PARTICULAR! I KNOW A LOT OF PEOPLE HERE!
OH, I DON'T THINK YOU'D KNOW HER! SHE'S NOT A REGULAR!


AND I AM? HMPH! THAT DOESN'T SOUND VERY NICE WHEN YOU PUT IT LIKE THAT!
BUT I DIDN'T MEAN...! I'M SORRY, ROBIN! CAN WE JUST START OVER, PLEASE?

WELL, OKAY! HI, I'M ROBIN!

HI ROBIN! I'M MITCH! ARE YOU HERE WITH ANYONE?

WELL I CAME HERE WITH A GIRLFRIEND, BUT I LOST TRACK OF HER ABOUT AN HOUR AGO!

YOU... LOST TRACK OF HER? AREN'T YOU WORRIED?

OH, NO... I KNOW THE GUY SHE WAS WITH! IF THEY'RE NOT BACK IN A FEW MINUTES, I WON'T SEE HER 'TIL MORNING!

M...MORNING? WHY WOULD YOU THINK *THAT?*

WELL IT'S ***HARDLY*** THE FIRST TIME SHE'S DISAPPEARED WITH A GUY... AND IT ***WON'T*** BE HER ***LAST***, I GUARANTEE YOU THAT!


MITCH? ARE YOU OKAY? YOU LOOK SO PALE ALL OF A SUDDEN! IS ANYTHING WRONG?
I JUST... I...!
CELIA LEFT? WITH SOME GUY? AGAIN?!

COME ON, HONEY! ***SOMETHING'S*** OBVIOUSLY UPSET YOU! TELL ME... ***PLEASE!*** MAYBE I CAN HELP!

WELL I... I JUST SPOTTED MY ***FRIEND*** I WAS MEETING! BUT SHE WAS ***LEAVING*** WITH ***SOMEONE ELSE!***

OH... MITCH! I'M *SO* SORRY! I KNOW HOW *MUCH* THAT CAN HURT... *BELIEVE ME!* IS THERE ANYTHING *I* CAN DO?

THANK YOU, ROBIN! THAT'S *KIND* OF YOU, BUT... I THINK IT'S *BEST* THAT I LEAVE!


UH-UH! NO WAY! THE LAST THING YOU NEED RIGHT NOW IS TO BE ALONE... WALLOWING IN SELF-PITY!
MAYBE, BUT...!


MAYBE NOTHING! YOU NEED TO STICK AROUND HERE, HAVE SOME FUN AND FORGET ALL ABOUT YOUR LITTLE SLUT GIRLFRIEND!
WELL I WOULDN'T CALL HER...!


AND LUCKILY FOR YOU, YOU HAVE YOUR VERY OWN, PERSONAL FUN GUIDE RIGHT HERE IN FRONT OF YOU!
I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, ROBIN, BUT I REALLY DON'T...!

C'MON, MITCH! WHAT CAN IT **HURT?** BESIDES, HOW CAN YOU SAY NO TO **THIS** FACE, HMMM?

SIGH! YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S JUST **NOT** IN ME TO SAY **NO** TO YOU, ROBIN!


HMMM... I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND! LET'S GO LOOSEN UP ON THE DANCE FLOOR BEFORE WE HIT THE BAR, OKAY?
YOU'RE THE "FUN GUIDE"! YOU LEAD, I'LL FOLLOW!


THAT'S WHAT I'M COUNTING ON!
AND LET'S SEE JUST HOW FAR!



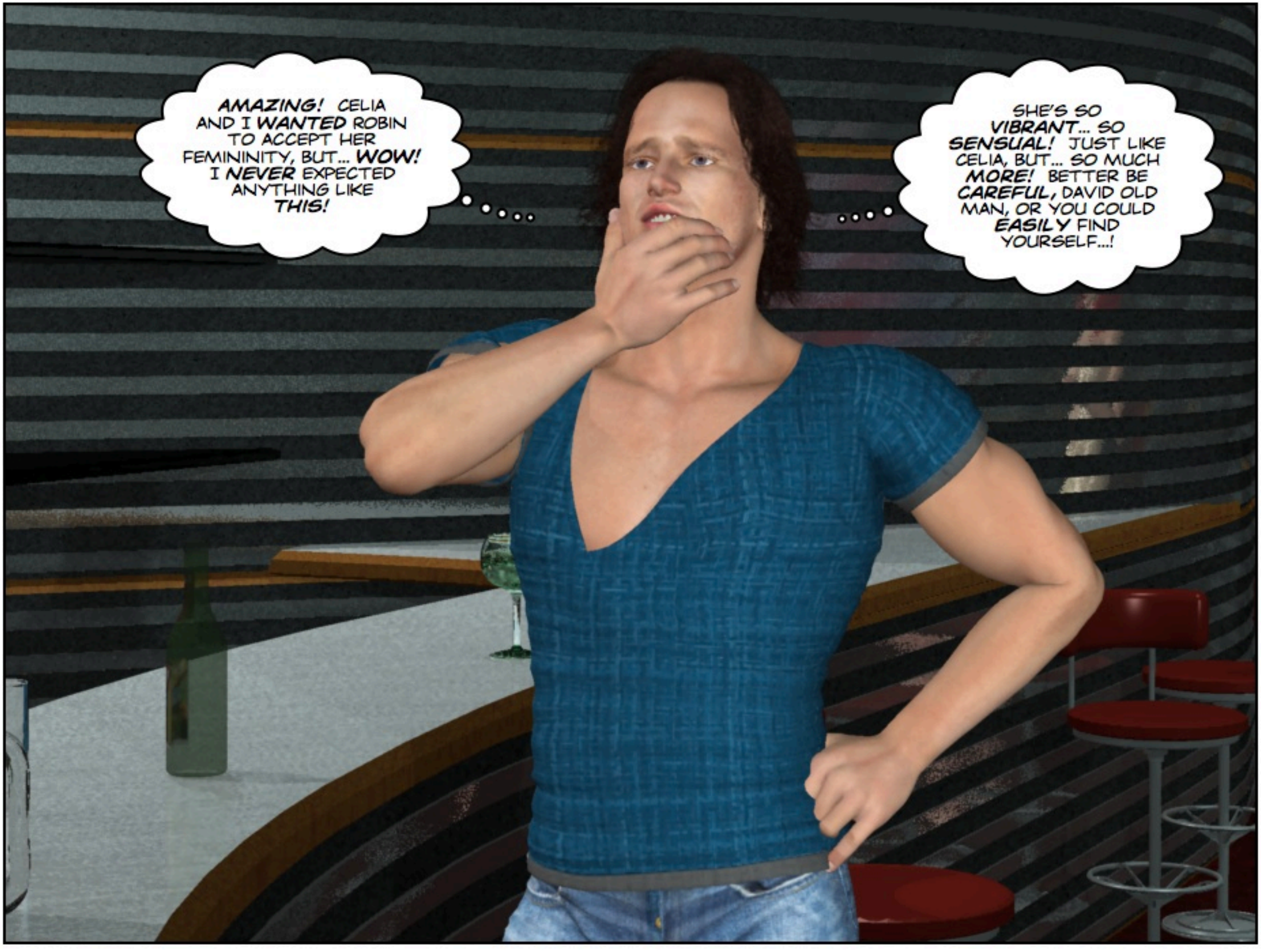





I'M GONNA GO FRESHEN UP! DON'T GO ANYWHERE, OKAY?
I'LL BE RIGHT HERE! PROMISE!


WELL BOSS... I THINK I'VE TOYED WITH YOU LONG ENOUGH!

SIMON GAVE ME THIS ***SPECIAL*** PERFUME TO WEAR AS A ***LAST RESORT!*** GIVEN ENOUGH TIME, I DON'T THINK I'D ***NEED*** IT, BUT I'M READY FOR SOME ACTION... ***NOW!***


AMAZING! CELIA AND I WANTED ROBIN TO ACCEPT HER FEMININITY, BUT... WOW! I NEVER EXPECTED ANYTHING LIKE THIS!
SHE'S SO VIBRANT... SO SENSUAL! JUST LIKE CELIA, BUT... SO MUCH MORE! BETTER BE CAREFUL, DAVID OLD MAN, OR YOU COULD EASILY FIND YOURSELF...!


MISS ME?
WHAT SANE MAN WOULDN'T?


SNIFF! IS THAT A NEW *PERFUME* I DETECT?
MM-HMM! I WANTED YOU TO SMELL *ME*, NOT THE CLUB! YOU *LIKE?*


IT'S... INTOXICATING!
GOOD! THAT MEANS IT'S WORKING! ANOTHER DANCE? SOUNDS LIKE THEY'VE SLOWED IT DOWN A BIT!


JUST MY SPEED! LEAD ON!






HMMM! SOMEONE'S HEARTBEAT SEEMS TO BE RACING!


ALMOST AS FAST AS MINE! SEE?
GOD! SHE'S SO... PERFECT!

MY! SOMETHING VERY LARGE AND ALIVE SEEMS TO BE DOWN THERE! I HOPE IT'S FRIENDLY!

FOR YOU... EXTREMELY FRIENDLY!

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? I SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS, BUT... I CAN'T HELP MYSELF!


OOOOO! I'VE GOT TO HAVE YOU!
I KNOW, BABY... I KNOW! AND I KNOW JUST THE PLACE!




OHHHH! WHY HELLO THERE BIG FELLA!


OHHHH!
THAT'S IT, BABY!
RIGHT THERE...
RIGHT...!


JACKPOT!!

The next day...

SO HOW'D IT GO LAST NIGHT? DID IT ALL GO ACCORDING TO ***PLAN?*** IS HE A BROKEN, ***JADED MAN?***


GOOD MORNING TO YOU TOO, BOSS! YES, I'M FINE! THANKS FOR ASKING!
YEAH, OKAY! BLAH, BLAH, BLAH! TELL ME! DETAILS!

SIGH! **FINE!** YES, IT WENT **JUST** LIKE WE'D PLANNED! HE'S **CONVINCED** THAT CELIA'S **BOFFING** RANDOM STUDS FROM THE CLUB! AND **YEAH,** HE DIDN'T TAKE IT WELL!

PISSED AS **HELL,** HUH?


NO... MORE LIKE DEVASTATED! HE WAS HEARTBROKEN! SEEING THE LOOK ON HIS FACE MADE IT ALL A LOT LESS ENJOYABLE THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE!
WHATEVER! SO, IS THAT WHEN YOU TURNED ON YOUR CONSIDERABLE CHARMS AND LED HIM ASTRAY?

SIGH! **YEAH!** **THAT... THAT** WAS THE BEST PART! **ADNS** OR NOT, I CAN **DEFINITELY** SEE WHY CELIA HAS THE HOTS FOR HIM! THE WAY HE MADE ME **FEEL** IN THOSE FEW MINUTES...!

SIGH! I CAN ONLY **IMAGINE** WHAT A WHOLE **NIGHT** WITH HIM WOULD BE LIKE!

AND NOT TO **BRAG** OR ANYTHING, BUT BY THE TIME WE FINISHED, I DOUBT HE COULD REMEMBER HIS OWN **NAME**, LET ALONE **CELIA'S**!

I LOVE IT! DAVID MUST BE TWISTED INTO KNOTS FROM THE COMBINED FEELINGS OF JEALOUSY, LUST AND GUILT!

YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD PUT IT OVER THE TOP? A QUICK OFFICE BOFF WHERE CELIA CATCHES YOU AND DAVID TOGETHER! IT WOULD GUARANTEE THAT HIS MIND REMAINS TOTALLY MESSED UP WHILE MY PARTNERS FINALIZE EVERYTHING! TALK ABOUT PERFECT!

LOOK, I'VE HAD SOME TIME TO THINK ABOUT THIS AND I DON'T THINK BREAKING THEM UP COMPLETELY IS NECESSARY!

REALLY? YOU DON'T, HUH? AND WHY IS THAT, PRAY TELL!

WE'VE ALREADY DONE ENOUGH TO KEEP DAVID TOTALLY DISTRACTED WHILE YOU STEAL HIS COMPANY! GOING ANY FURTHER IS JUST... CRUEL! DON'T YOU GET IT? HE AND CELIA REALLY DO LOVE EACH OTHER! I'VE SEEN IT... AND I ACCEPT IT... FOR REAL, THIS TIME!

ISN'T IT ENOUGH THAT YOU'RE TAKING DM INDUSTRIES FROM HIM? AT LEAST LET DAVID KEEP CELIA! GIVEN TIME, I'M SURE THEY'LL GET OVER THIS... INTERFERENCE I'VE CAUSED!

HMMM... SOUNDS LIKE **SOMEONE** NEEDS ANOTHER UP CLOSE **DOSE** OF MY PATENTED **"SIMON SCENT"!**

YOU KNOW, I CAN **UNDERSTAND** HOW YOU'D FEEL THAT WAY! SHE WAS YOUR **WIFE**... FOR A LONG, LONG TIME AND YOU JUST WANT HER TO BE HAPPY... **REGARDLESS** OF HOW SHE **CHEATED** ON YOU!

SNIFF! WELL **YEAH**, BUT...!


AND DAVID, WELL... HE'S THE GUY WHO GAVE YOU A SECOND AND EVEN A THIRD CHANCE, SO IT'S NO WONDER YOU STILL FEEL SOME LOYALTY TO HIM... EVEN THOUGH HE ESSENTIALLY STOLE YOUR WIFE FROM YOU!
YEAH, HE... HE DID, I GUESS, BUT...!


BUT YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ANYONE! I KNOW EXACTLY WHY YOU'VE SUDDENLY DEVELOPED A SOFT SPOT... ESPECIALLY FOR DAVID!
YOU'RE NOT THINKING WITH YOUR HEAD, OR EVEN YOUR HEART... YOU'RE THINKING WITH YOUR PUSSY! YOU SAID IT YOURSELF... HOW GOOD HE FELT INSIDE YOU AND HOW MUCH YOU'D LOVE TO HAVE HIM AGAIN!
MMMM... HE DID FEEL WONDERFUL!

AND IT **JUST** SO HAPPENS, I HAVE SOME DOCUMENTS I NEED **DELIVERED** TO HIM! I'M **SURE** A LITTLE VISIT FROM **YOU** WOULD BRIGHTEN HIS DAY! VIVID **REMEMBRANCES** OF **LAST NIGHT** AND ALL THAT!

HOW YOU **SMELLED**, HOW YOU **TASTED**... HOW YOU **FELT**! HOW SOON UNTIL HE COULD HAVE YOU **THAT** WAY AGAIN?

MMMMM... HAVE ANY MORE OF THAT **PERFUME** AROUND?

A few minutes later...

ROBIN? ARE YOU IN HERE?


DAMN! I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TALK TO HER ALL WEEK, BUT SHE NEVER SEEMS TO BE HERE IN THE OUTER OFFICE AND SHE HASN'T BEEN RETURNING MY CALLS!
.....

IF WHAT MAEVE AND I FOUND OUT IS ***TRUE***, SIMON COULD BE TRYING TO LITERALLY ***MESS WITH HER MIND!*** I'VE GOT TO ***WARN*** HER BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

EVERYTHING'S IN PLACE! BY ***THIS*** TIME TOMORROW, THE ***TAKEOVER*** SHOULD BE COMPLETE!

TAKEOVER?!

DON'T WORRY! MITCHELL IS NOW **OBSESSED** WITH MY OPERATIVE, AND WORK IS THE **LAST** THING ON HIS MIND! I **GUARANTEE** THAT THE OLD MAN WILL REMAIN **COMPLETELY** IN THE DARK REGARDING OUR ACTIVITIES UNTIL IT'S **FAR TOO LATE!**

OH MY GOD! IS CELIA WORKING WITH SIMON?


BUT CAN YOU TRUST THIS OPERATIVE OF YOURS?
WITHOUT A DOUBT! I ESSENTIALLY CREATED HER USING THE VERY SAME PROCESSES WE'LL SELL TO THE HIGHEST BIDDERS ONCE WE TAKE CONTROL OF THE COMPANY!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU CREATED HER?

TO BE ***TRUTHFUL***, IT ALL KIND OF ***FELL*** INTO MY LAP ONCE SHE, OR SHOULD I SAY ***"HE"*** AT THE TIME, STARTED THE BALL ROLLING!

I TOOK ONE ***DISGRUNTLED*** DATA-ANALYST WITH ***DUBIOUS*** ETHICS, APPLIED A HEALTHY DOSE OF THE NEW ***EXPERIMENTAL F-RHO-DT*** FORMULA AND THEN EXPOSED HER TO SEVERAL OF OUR NEW ***AEROSOL COMPOUNDS*** THAT ENSURE COMPLIANCE, LOYALTY AND A HOST OF OTHER ***ADVANTAGEOUS CHARACTERISTICS!***

VOILA! MY VERY OWN ***MATA-HARI!***

I SENT YOU ALL THE DATA ON HER, BUT I GUESS YOU HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO READ THROUGH IT YET! BUT IF IT HELPS, I'M SENDING YOU A QUICK ***BEFORE*** AND ***AFTER*** PICTURE OF MY ***NEW ASSISTANT!***

REMARKABLE! TRULY REMARKABLE! I HAD NO IDEA THE NEW F-RHO-DT COULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT! HOW LONG DID THIS PROCESS TAKE?

THOSE PICTURES WERE TAKEN TWO WEEKS APART FROM ONE ANOTHER, BUT THE PHYSICAL TRANSFORMATION MOST LIKELY OCCURRED OVER THE COURSE OF A FEW MINUTES!

IF *THAT'S* THE CASE, WE'RE GOING TO MAKE *MILLIONS*... IF NOT *BILLIONS!*

EXACTLY! AND NOW THAT WE'VE ACCUMULATED ENOUGH DM STOCK, BY THIS TIME *TOMORROW,* THE COMPANY AND *EVERYTHING* IT OWNS AND CONTROLS WILL BE *OURS!*


OH MY GOD! IT'S NOT CELIA... IT'S ROBIN! HE'S ALREADY GOTTEN TO HER! AND THEY'RE TRYING TO TAKE DM FROM DAVID! I'VE GOT TO WARN HIM!

And at that very moment...

HOW COULD THINGS GO FROM **PERFECT** TO **DISMAL** SO QUICKLY AND **COMPLETELY?** IT WAS ALREADY BAD **ENOUGH** THAT CELIA IS **CHEATING** ON ME, BUT I HAD TO GO **COMPOUND** THE PROBLEM BY BEING UNFAITHFUL **MYSELF!**

AND **NOT** JUST WITH A **RANDOM** WOMAN! WITH HER **ROOMMATE!** MY GOD! **WHAT** WAS I THINKING?

THE ONLY *SAVING* GRACE IN ALL THIS IS THAT ROBIN DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS *ME* LAST NIGHT! SO THERE'S NO WAY THAT *CELIA* CAN FIND OUT!

AND AS FOR *ROBIN*, WELL... I'LL JUST STEER *CLEAR* OF SIMON'S OFFICE FOR AWHILE!


HI, MR. MITCHELL! I HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING!
OH, UH...ROBIN! I'M, WELL... A LITTLE BUSY!

WELL, THIS WON'T TAKE A ***MINUTE***, I PROMISE! MR. GREELEY JUST SENT ME DOWN BECAUSE HE NEEDS YOUR SIGNATURE ON A FEW THINGS!

OH WELL...OKAY! JUST ***LEAVE*** THEM HERE, THANK YOU!


ACTUALLY, HE WANTED ME TO WAIT FOR YOU TO SIGN THEM AND BRING THEM BACK! I GUESS THEY'RE PRETTY IMPORTANT! HOPE YOU DON'T MIND!


NO... NO, OF COURSE NOT! THIS'LL JUST TAKE ME A MINUTE THEN!




YOU SOUND VERY CHEERFUL TODAY, ROBIN!
OH... YEAH! PROBABLY BECAUSE I HAD SUCH A WONDERFUL TIME LAST NIGHT!


I... I'M SORRY! WHAT?!
LAST NIGHT! I MET SOMEONE AND HAD A VERY... NICE TIME WITH HIM!

OH DEAR! I DIDN'T THINK... ARE YOU SAYING YOU HAVE FEELINGS FOR THIS... THIS FELLOW?

DEFINITELY! HE'S THE KIND OF GUY WHO MAKES IT EASY FOR ME TO BE THE WOMAN I THINK I WANT TO BE!

HE'S STRONG, SENSITIVE, ***HANDSOME***, AND ***VERY***... WELL, I'M SURE ***YOU*** DON'T WANT TO HEAR ALL THE ***DETAILS!***

OH, ***THAT'S*** OKAY, ROBIN! I DON'T MIND! BUT I CONFESS I HAVE SOME ***CONCERNS!*** YOU'RE ***NEW*** TO THIS, AND MEN CAN BE SO... SO ***UNDERHANDED!*** HOW MUCH DO YOU ***KNOW*** ABOUT THE YOUNG MAN?


NOT MUCH! JUST HIS NAME! BUT I HAVE THE FEELING THAT I'M GOING TO SEE HIM AGAIN... THIS TINGLING FEELING INSIDE ME!


DAVID, I NEED TO TALK TO YOU! WE...!

OH! AM I INTERRUPTING ANYTHING?

NO! OF COURSE NOT, STACY! ROBIN HERE WAS JUST DROPPING OFF SOME PAPERS FOR ME TO SIGN! ISN'T THAT RIGHT, ROBIN?


UH-HUH! WHATEVER YOU SAY, MR. MITCHELL! WELL, I THINK IT'S BEST I STOP BY LATER TO PICK THEM UP... IF THAT'S OKAY WITH YOU!
SURE! THAT'LL BE FINE, ROBIN!

OKAY THEN! BYE, MR. MITCHELL! SEE YA, STACY!


SO, WHAT WAS GOING ON IN HERE?
NOTHING! NOTHING AT ALL! JUST BUSINESS, LIKE SHE SAID!
REALLY! THAT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE TO ME!

SO **WHAT** IF IT WASN'T? ROBIN'S AN **EXTREMELY** ALLURING YOUNG LADY! YOU CERTAINLY CAN'T **BLAME** A MAN FOR BEING **ATTRACTED** TO HER! ESPECIALLY **CONSIDERING...!**

CONSIDERING **WHAT?**


CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT CELIA IS PLAYING ME FOR A FOOL AND JUMPING INTO THE SACK WITH ANYONE WHO'LL HAVE HER!
WHAT?! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS! WHO TOLD YOU THAT?


WELL... ROBIN DID ACTUALLY!
ROBIN DID? YOU MEAN SHE JUST WALKED IN HERE AND TOLD YOU THAT CELIA WAS BEING UNFAITHFUL?
WELL... NOT IN SO MANY WORDS! BUT SHE DID INDIRECTLY GIVE ME THAT INFORMATION... ENOUGH FOR SIMON AND ME TO FIGURE OUT THE REST!

SIMON?! HE'S THE REASON I'M HERE, DAVID! I JUST OVERHEARD HIM TALKING TO SOMEONE ON THE PHONE ABOUT TAKING OVER YOUR COMPANY! AND HE'S BEEN USING ROBIN TO HELP HIM DO JUST THAT!

WHAT?! HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?


SIMON HAS INVESTORS WHO'VE BEEN BUYING UP CONTROLLING INTERESTS IN YOUR STOCK! HE OBVIOUSLY HAD ROBIN FEED YOU THAT CRAP ABOUT CELIA TO KEEP YOU DISTRACTED ENOUGH SO YOU WOULDN'T NOTICE WHAT WAS GOING ON!


MY GOD! WHY WOULD ROBIN DO SUCH A THING?
I THINK SIMON HAS BEEN DRUGGING HER! I HAVEN'T WORKED OUT ALL THE DETAILS, BUT REGARDLESS, WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING TO STOP THIS BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! THEY'RE PLANNING ON VOTING YOU OUT AT TOMORROW'S STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING!

THAT DOESN'T GIVE US MUCH TIME! WE NEED TO CONTACT AS ***MANY*** OF OUR CURRENT STOCKHOLDERS AS POSSIBLE AND SEE WHERE THEIR ***LOYALTIES*** ARE! THAT WILL GIVE US A ***BETTER*** IDEA OF WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST!

I'LL GET STARTED RIGHT AWAY!


BUT... WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT SIMON... AND ROBIN?
NOTHING WE CAN DO RIGHT NOW! LET'S CONCENTRATE ON KEEPING THE COMPANY FIRST AND DEALING WITH THEM LATER!

BUT FIRST... ONE *VERY* IMPORTANT PHONE CALL...!

HELLO? CELIA...?

And just outside David's office...

YOU LOOK **FREAKED**! WHAT'S UP?

WE'VE **UNDERESTIMATED** SIMON! HE HASN'T JUST BEEN **DRUGGING** ROBIN, HE'S BEEN **USING** HER TO HELP HIM **TAKE OVER THE COMPANY!**


WHAT? HOW THE HELL COULD HE PULL THAT OFF?
WALK WITH ME AND I'LL FILL YOU IN!

HOLY SHIT! THAT IS SICK! BRILLIANT... BUT SICK!

WHAT I DON'T GET IS WHY ROBIN STILL SEEMS TO BE UNDER SIMON'S CONTROL! I JUST SAW ROBIN IN DAVID'S OFFICE AND SHE SEEMED AWFULLY INTENT ON KEEPING HIM DISTRACTED, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!

BUT WHY? WE REPLACED THE CANDLE AT HER DESK SEVERAL DAYS AGO! DO YOU THINK SIMON'S COLOGNE COULD BE STRONG ENOUGH ON ITS OWN TO INFLUENCE HER BEHAVIOR?


MAYBE IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH SIMON! WE SHOULD CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY THAT ROBIN JUST LIKES BEING A BAD GIRL!
WHAT? HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?

WELL, LOOK AT HER ***TRACK RECORD!*** SHE WASN'T THE MOST ***ETHICAL*** PERSON TO START WITH! I MEAN, ***HACKING*** INTO THE COMPANY COMPUTERS AND ***STEALING*** TOP SECRET MERCHANDISE... NOT ONCE, BUT ***TWICE!***

C'MON! IS IT ***THAT*** HARD TO BELIEVE SHE'D TURN TO THE ***DARK SIDE?***

WA... **WAIT A MINUTE!** YOU... YOU **KNOW?** YOU KNOW ABOUT **ROBIN**... AND **BOB...?**

SAME PERSON... YEAH, **I KNOW!** I FIGURED IT OUT AFTER HER **FIRST DAY** HERE! BOB HAS ALWAYS HAD SOME **QUIRKY** DESK HABITS AND WHEN I NOTICED THAT ROBIN HAD THE **SAME ONES,** WELL... LET'S JUST SAY I'M A MUCH BETTER **HACKER** THAN HE WAS!


BUT... YOU NEVER SAID ANYTHING!
NONE OF MY BUSINESS... AND I LIKED ROBIN A HELLUVA LOT MORE THAN BOB! SO WHY CAUSE A STIR?


REALLY? IT WAS JUST THAT EASY FOR YOU TO ACCEPT? SERIOUSLY?
IT'S THE WAY I ROLL, STACY!
SO, GETTING BACK TO MORE URGENT MATTERS... HOW ARE YOU PLANNING ON STOPPING SIMON?

DAVID AND I ARE CONTACTING ALL EXISTING STICKHOLDERS AND SEEING WHICH ONES ARE ***STILL*** LOYAL TO US!

YEAH... ***THAT'LL*** ONLY HELP IF THEY'RE TELLING YOU THE ***TRUTH!*** WHAT YOU ***REALLY*** NEED IS A ***HEAVY HITTER***... SOMEONE YOU CAN ***TRUST*** WITH SHITLOADS OF ***CLOUT*** TO BUY OUT ENOUGH OF THE SMALLER MEMBERS TO ENSURE THE VOTE GOES ***YOUR WAY!***


KNOW ANYONE LIKE THAT?
SIGH! I DO... BUT HE MAY NOT BE WILLING TO HELP!
A LITTLE "HISTORY", HUH?


OH MAEVE... YOU HAVE NO IDEA!

That evening, back at the apartment...

HEY THERE! *HOW* WAS YOUR DAY?

OH, NOTHING *SPECIAL!* SAME OLD, SAME OLD! YOU KNOW!

SORRY I DIDN'T **WAKE** YOU BEFORE I LEFT TODAY, BUT YOU WERE SLEEPING SO **SOUNDLY,** I FIGURED YOU NEEDED IT!

YES, I **MUST** HAVE! I HAVEN'T CRASHED LIKE **THAT** IN A **LONG** TIME! SORRY IF I SPOILED OUR **GIRLS' NIGHT IN!** HOPE I DIDN'T SNORE!

HMMM! SOUNDS LIKE **SOMEONE'S** ON A **FISHING TRIP!** SHE'S **BOUND** TO HEAR AT LEAST **SOME** VERSION OF LAST NIGHT, IF SHE HASN'T **ALREADY**, SO I GUESS **NOW'S** A GOOD TIME AS ANY TO **COVER MY ASS!**


ACTUALLY... TO BE TRUTHFUL... I WENT OUT SHORTLY AFTER YOU FELL ASLEEP! I KNOW I WASN'T SUPPOSSED TO GO ALONE, BUT... I GUESS MY IMPULSIVE NATURE GOT THE BEST OF ME!
YOU... YOU WENT OUT? ALONE?

SHE **ADMITS** GOING OUT! I DIDN'T EXPECT **THAT** AT ALL! BUT HOW **MUCH** OF LAST NIGHT WILL SHE **ADMIT** TO? I WONDER?


WELL, INITIALLY... BUT I MET UP WITH A GIRL WE MET AT THE CLUB THE OTHER NIGHT... CANDY! YOU REMEMBER HER... BLONDE, DYNAMITE FIGURE... IN FACT, SHE KINDA LOOKS LIKE YOU.. FROM A DISTANCE AT LEAST!


WE'VE MET LOT'S OF PEOPLE AT THAT PLACE! I'M SURPRISED YOU CAN REMEMBER THEM ALL BECAUSE I SURE CAN'T!
THAT'S WHAT I WAS COUNTING ON!


SO, THIS CANDY WAS WITH YOU ALL EVENING?
WELL... NOT REALLY! SHE HOOKED UP WITH SOME GUY AND LEFT AFTER ABOUT AN HOUR!


BUT IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER, I WASN'T ALONE FOR LONG!
THAT'S WHAT I'M AFRAID OF!


IT ALL MAKES SENSE NOW! SIMON HAD DAVID SO WORKED UP AND SUSPICIOUS THAT HE MISTOOK CANDY FOR ME LAST NIGHT! HE SOUNDED SO APOLOGETIC WHEN HE CALLED EARLIER AND TOLD ME EVERYTHING!
THE POOR MAN MUST HAVE BEEN DEVASTATED WHEN HE LEFT THAT CLUB IMMEDIATELY AFTER WATCHING WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS ME CHEATING ON HIM!

IT ***ALSO*** MEANS HE'S ***WRONG*** ABOUT ROBIN! SHE HASN'T BEEN A ***KNOWING*** PART IN ***ANY*** OF THIS! SHE MUST HAVE TOLD HIM ABOUT HER ***AFTER-HOURS LIFE*** AND THEN HE USED IT TO ***INCRIMINATE ME!***

...

...

THAT MAN IS SUCH A ***SLIME!*** HE'S TOTALLY ***MANIPULATED*** ROBIN... AND THE ***REST*** OF US AS WELL!

I SHOULD ***WARN*** HER ABOUT HER ***SLEAZY BOSS***, BUT I DON'T ***DARE!*** IF ROBIN SUDDENLY STARTS ACTING ***DIFFERENTLY*** TOMORROW, SIMON MIGHT REALIZE THAT WE ***KNOW*** WHAT HE'S UP TO!

EITHER WAY, AFTER TOMORROW, IT WON'T MAKE ***ANY*** DIFFERENCE!


SO, I SUPPOSE NOW YOU WANT TO GRILL ME ABOUT THE GUY I MET LAST NIGHT, AND...!


WHOA! WHAT'S THAT FOR?
NO REASON, REALLY!


I'M JUST SO GLAD YOU'RE HAPPY AND THAT OUR LIVES ARE WORKING OUT SO WELL!


ME TOO, CELIA! ME TOO!

The next day, on the way to the stockholders' meeting...

STEVEN! GOOD TO SEE YOU OLD FRIEND! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW *MUCH* THIS MEANS TO ME... *AND* THE COMPANY!

THINK *NOTHING* OF IT, DAVID! IT'S *MY* PLEASURE!

BETWEEN JUST THE **TWO** OF US, WE CONTROL **49%** OF THE VOTING SHARES IN THIS FIRM! THE CHANCES OF **ALL** THE REMAINING 51% VOTING **AGAINST** US IS PRETTY DAMN **SLIM!**

TRUE, BUT THERE'S BEEN A ***LOT*** OF PLAY IN THE MARKET THE LAST FEW DAYS! WE'RE NOT EVEN SURE ***WHO*** OWNS THE REMAINING STOCK! IT'S ALL BEEN BOUGHT UP BY ***NUMEROUS*** OTHER COMPANIES AND FIRMS WHICH, FRANKLY, SCARES THE ***HELL*** OUT OF ME!

DON'T WORRY, DAVID! YOUR FATHER ***STARTED*** THIS FIRM AND ***YOU'VE*** SUCCEEDED IN BUILDING IT INTO THE MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR CORPORATION IT IS TODAY! THERE'S NO ***WAY*** WE'RE GOING TO LET SOME YOUNG PUP LIKE ***GREELEY*** AND HIS CRONIES GET THEIR HANDS ON IT!


THANKS, STEVEN! THAT MEANS A LOT! SHALL WE?

GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. MITCHELL... AND MR. CHAMBERS, I BELIEVE!

HELLO ROBIN! IS EVERYONE HERE ALREADY?


ALMOST, BUT YOU CAN FOLLOW ME ON IN IF YOU LIKE!

I'LL SAY ONE THING FOR GREELEY, HE DOES KNOW HOW TO PICK A SECRETARY!

YOU HAVE NO IDEA, STEVEN!

DAVID! AND STEVEN! NICE OF YOU TO JOIN US! HAVE A SEAT, WON'T YOU? WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO BEGIN!

SINCE WHEN DO STOCKHOLDERS' MEETINGS TAKE PLACE IN YOUR OFFICE, SIMON? DID I MISS A MEMO OR SOMETHING?

OH, YOU'VE MISSED OUT ON **QUITE** A BIT LATELY, DAVID! THE REASON WE'RE MEETING **HERE** IS BECAUSE **I** HAVE THE PROXIES FOR A **SIGNIFICANT** PERCENTAGE OF THE **VOTING STOCK** IN YOUR COMPANY!

MR. ALAN **PERKINS** HERE HOLDS THE PROXIES FOR **ALL OTHER** SHARES **NOT** CONTROLLED BY YOU OR STEVEN! AND NOW THAT WE'RE ALL HERE, LET'S GET STARTED, **SHALL WE!**

I BELIEVE OUR **FIRST** ORDER OF BUSINESS SHOULD BE TO VOTE ON A **NEW CEO!** **SORRY** DAVID, BUT IT'S TIME FOR SOME NEW, **YOUNG** BLOOD AT THE **TOP** OF THIS COMPANY!

I **SECOND** THAT MOTION!

THE MOTION ***PASSES!*** ANY ***NOMINATIONS*** FOR NEW CEO?

I NOMINATE ***SIMON GREELEY*** AS NEW CEO!

AND ***I'LL*** SECOND ***THAT*** MOTION! THANK YOU, ALAN!

DO YOU ***REALLY*** THINK YOU'RE GOING TO GET AWAY WITH THIS, SIMON?

OH, I ALREADY **HAVE,** DAVID! YOU SEE, ALAN REPRESENTS **30%** OF THE VOTING STOCK AND I REPRESENT **21%,** SO TOGETHER **WE** JUST ELECTED **ME** THE NEW **CEO OF DM INDUSTRIES**... A NAME I WILL **SOON** BE CHANGING!

I DUNNO, GREELEY! IT'S BEEN CALLED **DM INDUSTRIES** SINCE **DON MITCHELL** STARTED THE COMPANY, AND I'D SURE **HATE** TO SEE IT CHANGED... **REGARDLESS** OF WHAT I THOUGHT OF THAT **S.O.B.!**

HARLEY?

COMSTOCK? HE'S THE **LAST** PERSON I **EVER** EXPECTED TO SEE HERE!

LOOK! I DON'T KNOW **WHO** THE HELL YOU ARE, BUT THIS MEETING IS LIMITED TO **STOCKHOLDERS** AND THEIR AGENTS **ONLY!** SO, IF YOU DON'T **MIND...!**

NOT AT **ALL,** YOUNG FELLA! I'LL JUST HAVE A SEAT RIGHT HERE BY THIS **PRETTY LITTLE THING** WHILE **YOU** EXCUSE YOURSELF TO WHEREVER IT IS **SNIPPY YOUNG PUPS** LIKE YOU GO RIGHT BEFORE THEY'RE **FIRED!**

ME?! I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE, YOU OLD GOAT! JUST WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, ANYWAY?

NAME'S **HARLEY COMSTOCK!** AND AS OF ABOUT AN HOUR AGO, **I'M** THE GUY WHO **BOUGHT OUT** THE STOCK OPTIONS FROM **EVERY ONE** OF THOSE PEOPLE YOU **"HAD"**, PAST TENSE, A VOTING PROXY FROM!


WASN'T CHEAP EITHER! GREEDY BASTARDS! PROBABLY HAVE TO SELL ONE OF MY JETS... MAYBE TWO... TO PAY FOR IT!

THAT... THAT'S NOT ***POSSIBLE!***

WELL, ACCORDING TO ***THAT*** LITTLE DOCUMENT FROM THE ***S.E.C.,*** IT'S NOT ONLY POSSIBLE... IT'S A ***DONE DEAL!*** AND SINCE BETWEEN US, DAVID AND I OWN ***52%*** OF THE VOTING STOCK, THE ***ONLY*** PERSON GOING ANYWHERE IS ***YOU*** YOUNG FELLA!

SECURITY'S ON THE WAY UP, IN CASE YOU NEED ANY ***HELP*** WITH YOUR THINGS, SIMON!


IT WASN'T JUST ME! THERE WERE OTHERS INVOLVED! THEY...!
CONSIDERING WHAT YOU JUST TRIED TO PULL AND YOUR LACK OF CREDIBILITY, I THINK THE BEST THING FOR YOU TO DO RIGHT NOW, GREELEY, IS TO JUST LEAVE... BEFORE IT GETS ANY WORSE FOR YOU!


BUT...!





WELL, MY ***CLIENTS*** MAY NOT BE TOO ***PLEASED*** WITH THE OUTCOME OF THIS MEETING, BUT THAT'S NEITHER HERE NOR THERE AS FAR AS ***I'M*** CONCERNED! ***CONGRATULATIONS***, MR. MITCHELL! AND HAVE A NICE DAY!

THANK YOU, MR. PERKINS! YOU TOO!


OH SHIT! IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SIMON IMPLICATES ME IN ALL THIS! THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY I CAN COVER MY ASS!
YOU OKAY, ROBIN?

I... I DON'T KNOW! EVERYTHING JUST *HAPPENED* SO FAST... I'M SO *CONFUSED!* AND WHAT *SIMON* DID... I... I THINK *I...!*

IT'S *OKAY*, HONEY! *I KNOW!* WE *ALL* KNOW! IT *WASN'T YOUR FAULT!*

IT... IT'S *NOT?*

NO! MAEVE AND I CAN ***PROVE*** THAT SIMON WAS ***DRUGGING*** YOU IN ORDER TO GET YOU TO HELP HIM!

DRUGGED?! IS THAT WHY I GAVE INTO SIMON SO EASILY?

DRUGGING ME? HOW?

THE **DESK CANDLE** HE GAVE YOU FOR A START! AND THAT HORRIFIC **COLOGNE** WAS LACED WITH **PHEROMONES** AND GOD KNOWS **WHAT ELSE!** MAEVE AND I BOTH NOTICED THE EFFECTS AFTER A VERY SHORT EXPOSURE, SO WE CAN ONLY **IMAGINE** THE NUMBER IT DID ON **YOU!**

WILL... WILL I BE **OKAY?**

NOW THAT SIMON'S **GONE,** THE EFFECTS SHOULD WEAR OFF PRETTY SOON! I'LL TALK TO DAVID AND SEE THAT YOU GET A FEW DAYS OFF! THAT'LL ALSO GIVE US TIME TO **REASSIGN** YOU SINCE YOUR BOSS NO LONGER WORKS HERE! SOUND **OKAY?**

SO **THAT'S** WHY I'VE BEEN DOING THESE **HORRIBLE** THINGS... TO CELIA... TO **DAVID!** HERE I THOUGHT **I** WAS MANIPULATING **HIM,** BUT SIMON WAS MANIPULATING **ME** ALL ALONG!


IT SOUNDS GREAT, STACY! I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT YOU ON MY SIDE!
WITHOUT YOUR HELP I'D STILL BE UNDER HIS CONTROL AND WHO KNOWS WHAT I'D BE DOING FOR HIM NEXT!


IF... IF YOU DON'T MIND, AFTER EVERYTHING THAT JUST HAPPENED, I THINK I NEED TO GO FIND SOMEPLACE QUIET... AND HAVE A GOOD LONG CRY!

THANK **GOD** IT'S OVER! I'M **FREE** OF HIM AND ALL THOSE HORRIBLE, **HORRIBLE** THINGS HE HAD ME DOING TO CELIA AND DAVID! I **TRULY** THOUGHT I WAS **ENJOYING** IT WHILE I WAS DOING THEM, BUT **NOW** I SEE... IT WAS THE **DRUGS** THAT MADE ME FEEL THAT WAY!

MAYBE **THAT'S** WHY I TOLD HIM IT WAS **ENOUGH!** I **KNEW** IT WAS WRONG, BECAUSE I **AM** A GOOD PERSON AFTER ALL!


EEEK! WHAT THE...?!

I KNEW YOU'D COME LOOKING FOR ME, BABE! LET'S YOU AND ME BLOW THIS PLACE AND SET UP OUR OWN COMPANY! WITH MY BRAINS AND YOUR BOD, WE'LL BE ON TOP IN NO TIME! WADDYA SAY?

ARE YOU INSANE? EVEN IF THE S.E.C. DOESN'T THROW THE BOOK AT YOU, THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I'D COME WITH YOU! STACY TOLD ME HOW YOU GOT ME TO DO ALL THOSE AWFUL THINGS! IS IT TRUE, BIG MAN? HAVE YOU BEEN DRUGGING ME ALL THIS TIME?

SNORT! **DRUGGING** YOU? YEAH, **SURE**... I USED A FEW THINGS TO GET YOU NICE AND **HORNY**, SO I COULD GET INTO YOUR **PANTIES!** BUT THAT'S **ALL** THAT STUFF IS DESIGNED TO DO! EVERYTHING **ELSE?** THAT'S ON **YOU**, BABE!

NO! YOU'RE LYING! EVERYTHING I DID WAS BECAUSE OF **YOU** AND THE **DRUGS!** YOU GOT ME TO DO THINGS I NEVER, **EVER** WOULD HAVE DONE IN MY **RIGHT MIND!**

BUT I'M IN MY RIGHT MIND **NOW,** AND IF YOU DON'T LET ME **GO** I'M GOING TO **SCREAM** AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS FOR **SECURITY!**


BELIEVE WHAT YOU **WANT** TO, BABE! BUT YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT **ONE** THING... **EVERYTHING** YOU ARE AND EVERYTHING YOU'VE **GOT** IS BECAUSE OF **ME**, AND DON'T YOU **FORGET** IT!
NO! I'M **NOT LIKE YOU**... I'M NOT **SNEAKY** AND **MANIPULATIVE**! I CAN'T **BELIEVE** I **EVER** THOUGHT YOU WERE A **DECENT** PERSON... AND **TRUSTED** YOU!

YOU SHOULD BE *THANKING* ME! *I* BROUGHT TO LIFE THE *WOMAN* YOU WERE *DESTINED* TO BECOME... A VIBRANT *VIXEN* WHO *EMBRACES* LIFE... AND *LOVES* A GOOD *FUCK!*

SPEAKING OF WHICH....

WHAT?! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS? I...!


DO WE NEED TO ADD HARASSMENT TO THE CHARGES AGAINST YOU, GREELEY?


OH, MR. CHAMBERS! THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE! HE... HE SURPRISED ME, AND I... I...!
YOU WERE TOLD TO LEAVE, GREELEY! I STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU DO THAT, IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!


I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D HAVE DONE IF YOU HADN'T COME BY, MR. CHAMBERS! THANK YOU!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, ROBIN! EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE JUST FINE! AND PLEASE, CALL ME STEVEN!

Meanwhile, back in the office...

HARLEY! NEEDLESS TO SAY, I'M FLABBERGASTED! YOU SAVED MY COMPANY! HOW DID YOU KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON? AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHY WOULD YOU DO THIS, CONSIDERING...?

CONSIDERING THE WAY THAT SLIMY OLD MAN OF YOURS, GOD REST HIS SOUL, STOLE MY WIFE FROM ME ALL THOSE YEARS AGO? WELL, IT SURE AS HELL WASN'T MY FIRST CHOICE, THAT'S FOR DAMN SURE!

WHEN SHE DIVORCED **ME** TO MARRY **YOUR FATHER**, IT TORE A **CHUNK** OUTTA MY HEART! **THAT** WAS BAD ENOUGH, BUT THEN, TEN YEARS LATER, HE WENT AND TOSSED **HER** ASIDE FOR A **YOUNGER MODEL!**

I **SWORE** SOMEDAY I'D GET **EVEN** WITH THAT **SONUVABITCH!**

I REALIZE MY FATHER WAS A ***HARSH*** AND ***DIFFICULT*** MAN! I WAS ONLY ***FOUR*** WHEN MY ***MOTHER*** PASSED AWAY, SO IT WAS MY FIRST STEP-MOTHER, ***YOUR EX-WIFE,*** THAT I CREDIT FOR ***RAISING*** ME! ***SHE*** WAS THE ONLY ***REAL MOTHER*** I EVER KNEW AND LOVED, SO I CAN'T FAULT HIM FOR BRINGING HER INTO OUR HOUSE!

I ***KNOW*** THAT, SON! AND ***THAT'S*** THE MAIN REASON I PULLED YOUR FAT OUTTA THE FIRE TODAY!

I KNEW THAT YOU ***PERSONALLY*** LOOKED AFTER HER ALL THESE YEARS, BUT IT WASN'T UNTIL LAST NIGHT THAT I LEARNED JUST ***HOW MUCH!***

YOU... YOU ***TALKED*** TO HER?

HOW THE ***HELL*** YOU THINK I ***LEARNED*** ABOUT ALL THIS BROUHA? SHE SHOWED UP AT MY ***OFFICE*** LAST NIGHT! SURPRISED THE ***HELL*** OUTTA ME WHEN MY SECRETARY TOLD ME ***WHO*** WAS WAITING TO SEE ME!

I'M STILL **AMAZED** YOU AGREED TO SEE ME!

AND IMAGINE MY SURPRISE WHEN **SHE** WALKS IN... LOOKING AS **YOUNG** AND **BEAUTIFUL** AS THE DAY I **MARRIED** HER! FOR A MOMENT... **JUST A MOMENT**... I **TRULY** THOUGHT I WAS BACK ON OUR WEDDING DAY! **THAT** WAS **MORE** THAN ENOUGH FOR ME TO DO **WHATEVER** SHE ASKED OF ME!

AND YOU DON'T KNOW HOW **MUCH** THIS MEANS TO ME, HARLEY! AFTER WHAT **I** DID... YOU **STILL** AGREED TO HELP! **THANK YOU!**

I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE **HAPPY** AND **HEALTHY,** DARLIN'! THAT'S **ALL** I EVER WANTED FOR YOU!

SO... SHE TELLS ME **YOU** DID THIS FOR HER... MADE HER **YOUNG** AGAIN! THAT TRUE?

YES! STACY WAS THE **FIRST** PERSON I THOUGHT OF WHEN WE DEVELOPED THE **F-RHO-DT** AND SHE **JUMPED** AT THE CHANCE!

OF COURSE, THE **EARLY** FORMULA JUST MADE WOMEN **YOUNG** AGAIN, BUT WE'VE **IMPROVED** ON IT QUITE A BIT SINCE THEN!


REALLY? ANYTHING IN A MEN'S LINE YET? JUST CURIOUS YOU KNOW!
OH, WE'RE WORKING ON IT, HARLEY! BELIEVE ME!

WELL HELL, WHY DON'T YOU GIVE ME A **TOUR** OF THE PLACE SINCE I'M NOW A **MAJOR STOCKHOLDER!** THEN I'LL SPRING FOR **DINNER** AND **DRINKS** TO SEAL THE DEAL **OFFICIALLY!**

SOUNDS **GREAT,** HARLEY!


AND I SINCERELY HOPE YOU'LL JOIN US, WON'T YOU STACY?


I... I'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH, HARLEY!



The next day, a little fireside chat amongst co-conspirators...

LOOK, I ***UNDERSTAND*** YOU'RE UPSET! THE PLAN ***SHOULD'VE*** WORKED! HOW WAS ***ANYONE*** TO KNOW SOMEONE LIKE ***COMSTOCK*** WOULD SWOOP IN AND ***BUY OUT*** MY INVESTORS? IT MUST'VE COST HIM A ***FORTUNE!***

IT WAS ***YOUR*** JOB TO ***KNOW!*** ***YOU WERE SLOPPY!***

DO YOU ***REALIZE*** HOW MUCH THIS ***COST*** ME? I ***STILL WANT THAT COMPANY!***

WELL... MAYBE WE **DON'T** NEED THE **COMPANY!** YOU'VE **STILL** GOT ALL THE **SAMPLES** I SENT YOU, RIGHT? WE JUST **ANALYZE** THEM, PRODUCE THEM **OURSELVES** AND MAKE OUR MILLIONS **THAT** WAY!

I'M **NOT** A **BLACK MARKETEER!** I WANT THE **COMPANY** AND **EVERYTHING OUTRIGHT!** NO **COMPLICATIONS!** **UNDERSTAND?**


YEAH, I GET IT! LOOK, ALL I NEED TO DO IS GET CLOSE TO ROBIN AGAIN! SHE'S A TRAMP AT HEART, TRUST ME! ALL SHE NEEDS IS A LITTLE CONVINCING AND SHE'LL BE ON MY TEAM AGAIN! WE'LL BE IN BUSINESS AGAIN, AND...!
ARE YOU DREAMING? THERE'S NO WAY YOU'D BE ABLE TO GET ANYWHERE CLOSE TO HER! NO, WE NEED TO GO A DIFFERENT ROUTE! ONE IN WHICH THE SERVICES OF SIMON GREELEY WILL NO LONGER BE NEEDED!


ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND? I PUT THIS WHOLE THING TOGETHER FOR YOU! HOW THE HELL CAN YOU DO IT WITHOUT ME?
OH, I STILL PLAN ON USING YOU! BUT IN A VERY DIFFERENT CAPACITY... AS YOU'RE ABOUT TO DISCOVER!


WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I...!
WHOA! I...! YOU... YOU PUT SOMETHING IN MY DRINK! I...!


OH NO!
YOU
DIDN'T...?!


AGHHHHHHH!


YOU... YOU CAN'T DO THIS! I... I...!


AMAZING! UNTIL NOW, I NEVER TRULY BELIEVED WHAT YOU TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR "ASSISTANT"!


BUT NOW THAT I'VE ACTUALLY SEEN IT HAPPEN, I CAN ONLY SAY... "WOW!"


WHY... WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO ME?


SIMON GREELEY WAS NO LONGER OF ANY USE TO ME... IN FACT, HE WAS A LIABILITY! BUT LIKE THIS, YOU CAN STILL BE VERY USEFUL! YOU MAY THINK IT'S EXTREME, BUT LIKE I SAID...


I WANT THAT COMPANY! NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES!

NOW QUIT **WHINING** AND GET YOURSELF **CLEANED UP!** WE HAVE A **LOT** OF WORK TO DO TO GET YOU READY FOR YOUR **NEW ASSIGNMENT!**



A Tangled Web

Chapter Ten

by CBlack


Three weeks later...
SO... THAT'S IT? IT'S DEFINITE?
YES, I'M AFRAID SO!

WE'RE GETTING MARRIED THIS WEEKEND IN **ACAPULCO** AND THEN TAKING A 'ROUND THE WORLD **HONEYMOON!** HARLEY SAYS HE WANTS TO MAKE UP FOR ALL THE TIME WE **COULD'VE** HAD TOGETHER!

I THINK THAT'S **GREAT,** STACY! **YOU,** MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, DESERVE IT! WE'LL... **I'LL** DEFINITELY MISS YOU, BUT I KNOW HE'LL MAKE YOU **HAPPY!**


THANK YOU, DAVID! I KNOW HE WILL, TOO!
OH, I MISSED IT! YOU ALREADY TOLD HIM... DIDN'T YOU?


WAIT! YOU TOLD CELIA BEFORE YOU TOLD ME?
WELL... YEAH! AND MAEVE... AND ROBIN!

SO, HOW AM I **POSSIBLY** SUPPOSED TO FIND SOMEONE TO **REPLACE** YOU SINCE YOU ARE, BY **MY** DEFINITION, ***IRREPLACABLE?***

CELIA AND I HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING THAT **VERY** THING AND HAVE COME UP WITH A ***STRONG*** POSSIBILITY!

OH, YOU **HAVE,** HAVE YOU? AND JUST **WHO** WOULD THIS "STRONG POSSIBILITY" BE?


ROBIN!


ROBIN?! YOU... YOU WANT ME TO HIRE ROBIN AS MY NEW ASSISTANT? BUT... BUT SHE...!

I **KNOW** YOU'RE PROBABLY **RELUCTANT**, CONSIDERING ROBIN'S RECENT BEHAVIOR, BUT IT WAS ALL **SIMON'S** DOING!

HE WAS THE ONE WHO MADE HER ALL **CRAZY** AND OUT OF CONTROL, BUT SINCE HE'S BEEN GONE, SHE'S BACK TO **NORMAL**... WELL, NORMAL FOR **ROBIN** AT LEAST!

AND **YOU** AGREE WITH THIS IDEA? ARE YOU **SURE?**

I'VE SPENT A **LOT** OF TIME WITH ROBIN THE LAST FEW WEEKS AND I'M **CONVINCED** THAT ANY LEFTOVER EFFECTS FROM SIMON ARE **GONE!** AND HER **NEW** BOSS TELLS ME SHE'S BEEN DOING A **BANG-UP** JOB!

WHAT DO YOU SAY, HONEY? CONSIDERING EVERYTHING SHE'S BEEN THROUGH, THIS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN HER WOULD GO A LONG, LONG WAY! ***PLEASE?***

SIGH! I ***NEVER*** HAD A CHANCE, DID I?

NONE WHATSOEVER!


NOW, IF YOU TWO WILL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE A MILLION THINGS TO TAKE CARE OF!
I'VE GOT TO GO, TOO! WILL YOU BE HOME EARLY TONIGHT?
I'LL DO MY BEST!


SIGH! OH CELIA! YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE ASKING OF ME!

"No idea at all!"

ROBIN, COULD YOU COME IN HERE FOR A MINUTE?

SURE BOSS! BE RIGHT IN!

WHAT'S UP, BOSS?

QUIT **CALLING** ME THAT! YOU KNOW HOW **UNCOMFORTABLE** I AM ABOUT THIS **DAMN PROMOTION!** I WAS PERFECTLY **HAPPY** AS A DATA-ANALYST, BUT **NO**... THEY **HAD** TO KICK ME UPSTAIRS TO REPLACE **SIMON!**

AWWW! **POOR MAEVE!** IT'S SO **UNFAIR!** FORCED TO TAKE A **HUGE** RAISE AND THE BIG **PRIVATE** OFFICE! NOT TO MENTION BEING SADDLED WITH THE **BEST** EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT AROUND!

NOT FOR LONG! JUST GOT A CALL FROM **HR! YOU'RE** BEING KICKED UPSTAIRS AS **MITCHELL'S NEW** EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT!


YOU'RE KIDDING! ME?! I KNOW STACY DECIDED TO CALL IT QUITS AFTER HARLEY PROPOSED, BUT... HE REALLY ASKED FOR ME?
YEP! EFFECTIVE TOMORROW! WHICH MEANS I'VE GOTTA FIND SOMEONE TO REPLACE YOU!


MAYBE YOU CAN FIND SOME HUNKY GUY IN THE SECRETARIAL POOL WHO LIKES TO WEAR TIGHT PANTS!
NOT EVERYONE LIKES TO SHOW OFF THEIR BOD AS MUCH AS YOU DO, ROBIN!


HEY, I CAN'T HELP IT! I COULD SAY ITS LEFTOVER TENDENCIES FROM SIMON DRUGGING ME, BUT IN REALITY... I JUST LIKE FLAUNTING WHAT I'VE GOT!


WELL, AT LEAST YOU DO IT WITH STYLE!
I LEARNED FROM THE BEST!


INTERESTING! DAVID'S BEEN AVOIDING ME LIKE THE PLAGUE EVER SINCE THAT NIGHT AT CLUB PARADOX! BUT NOW HE SUDDENLY WANTS ME AROUND? FUNNY THAT IT'S HAPPENING SHORTLY AFTER CELIA MOVED IN WITH HIM!
EITHER THEY'RE SO BLISSFULLY HAPPY HE'S ALL BUT FORGOTTEN WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN US, OR HE'S GOT AN ITCH THAT ONLY ROBIN CAN SCRATCH!


HAVE TO JUST WAIT AND SEE, I GUESS!
GOOD AFTERNOON, ROBIN!


WELL, HELLO STEVEN... I MEAN, MR. CHAMBERS! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN! YOU DON'T VISIT US ENOUGH AROUND HERE!
SOMETHING I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO REMEDY, MY DEAR! IS YOUR BOSS IN?


YES AND SHE'S EXPECTING YOU! GO RIGHT ON IN!
THANK YOU, ROBIN!

OH, THIS IS MY NIECE, ***AMBER!*** SHE JUST MOVED HERE FROM THE COAST! WOULD YOU MIND KEEPING HER ***COMPANY*** WHILE I'M WITH MAEVE?


NOT AT ALL, MR. CHAMBERS! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK!


YOU DO THAT VERY WELL!
DO WHAT?

OH, **YOU** KNOW... STROKING HIS **EGO**... THE WAY ONLY A **WOMAN** CAN!

I'M JUST USING THE **TOOLS** AT MY DISPOSAL. AND BESIDES, YOUR UNCLE IS A **VERY** HANDSOME MAN!

OH, I'M NOT ***CRITICIZING***... I'M ***APPLAUDING!*** AND IT DOESN'T HURT THAT HE'S ***FILTHY RICH,*** RIGHT?

NO, IT DOESN'T! BUT IT'S NOT THE ***MONEY*** THAT MAKES MEN LIKE ***STEVEN CHAMBERS*** SO ALLURING! IT'S THE WAY THEY ***MOVE*** THROUGH THE WORLD WITH UTTER ***CONFIDENCE!*** I WISH ***I*** HAD BEEN ABLE TO BE... TO ***BE WITH*** A MAN LIKE ***THAT!***

ARE YOU *KIDDING?* GIRLS LIKE *US*, THE WAY WE *LOOK*, WE'RE BUILT TO LAND *ANY GUY WE WANT!*

HA! I LIKE YOUR SPIRIT. *AMBER*, IS IT?

THAT'S RIGHT! *AMBER COOPER!*

AND I'M ROBIN! *ROBIN GLEASON!*

SO TELL ME, AMBER, WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE FROM THE COAST?

"SIGH!" I NEED A **JOB,** AND I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND ONE ON MY OWN! MY **UNCLE** SAYS HE CAN GET ME A SPOT AT ONE OF **HIS** COMPANIES! OF COURSE, BEING MY UNCLE, HE ALSO SAYS I HAVE TO START IN A **LOW-LEVEL POSITION** AND WORK MY WAY UP!

YOU KNOW... THE **BORING** WAY!

SAY, SINCE THEY'RE TRANSFERRING **ME** TO ANOTHER DEPARTMENT, **THIS** JOB IS OPENING UP! IT **IS** FAIRLY LOW LEVEL, BUT I THINK IT'S A GOOD PLACE TO START!

OF COURSE YOU'D BE WORKING FOR A **WOMAN,** WHICH MAY **NOT** BE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!


OH. I DON'T MIND WOMEN AT ALL! IN FACT, THEY CAN BE QUITE A BLAST!
WOW! JUST LIKE THAT, HUH? YOU DON'T PULL ANY PUNCHES, DO YOU?


WELL, WHEN YOU'RE NEW IN TOWN, YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE AND I HAVE A FEELING WE HAVE A LOT IN COMMON!
I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT! SAY, WANT TO MEET FOR A DRINK AROUND 5? THERE'S A LITTLE PUB DOWN ON THE CORNER!


I'D LIKE THAT!
AMBER, HONEY! COULD YOU COME IN FOR A FEW MINUTES?


SURE, UNCLE STEVEN! BYE ROBIN!
SEE YOU LATER, AMBER!


HOW DID YOU AND ROBIN HIT IT OFF?
SAME AS ALWAYS, UNCLE STEVEN!

Later that evening...

NICE APARTMENT! YOU HAVE IT ALL TO YOURSELF?

I DO NOW THAT MY EX-ROOMMATE MOVED IN WITH HER *FIANCÉ!*


SORRY ABOUT NOT WANTING TO STAY AT THE BAR! BUT ONCE GUYS STARTED PAWING US, IT TOTALLY TOOK THE FUN OUT OF OUR GIRLS' NIGHT OUT!
SORRY! THE GUYS ARE USUALLY PRETTY WELL-BEHAVED IN THAT PLACE, BUT I THINK WE CAN STILL HAVE A NICE GIRLS' NIGHT IN INSTEAD!


AND SOMETIMES THOSE KINDS OF GIRLS' NIGHTS ARE THE BEST KIND!
OH, I AGREE! WHOLEHEARTEDLY!


FINALLY! I THOUGHT I'D NEVER GET MY HANDS ON THIS LUSCIOUS BOD EVER AGAIN!
...


OOOOOOOO!
JESUS! NO WONDER SHE GAVE IN TO ME SO DAMN EASILY! THAT FEELS AMAZING!





Later...

WHEW! I GUESS I WAS *RIGHT* ABOUT YOU! YOU *HAVE* BEEN WITH A GIRL OR TWO, *HAVEN'T* YOU?

LET'S JUST SAY I HAVE *PLENTY* OF EXPERIENCE ALL THE WAY AROUND!


OH, I CAN BELIEVE THAT! SO, EARLIER YOU TALKED A LOT ABOUT YOUR GIRL FRIENDS AND ALL, BUT ARE THERE ANY GUYS IN YOUR LIFE TO, YOU KNOW... BALANCE THINGS OUT?
WELL, THERE WAS THIS ONE GUY DURING MY RECENT INSANE PERIOD! HE TOTALLY AWAKENED THIS NEW SIDE OF ME... BUT HE ALSO ALMOST RUINED ME COMPLETELY! THANK GOD HE'S OUT OF THE PICTURE! GONE AND NOT COMING BACK!


BAD NEWS, HUH?
THE WORST!
BUT NOBODY ELSE?

WELL, THERE WAS ***ANOTHER*** GUY I HAD A LITTLE ***FLING*** WITH A FEW WEEKS AGO!

JUST A ***FLING***, HUH?

DEFINITELY! BUT... MMMMMMM! I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO ***STOP*** THINKING ABOUT HIM SINCE!

REALLY? WELL HOW'S HE FEEL ABOUT YOU?

NOT SURE! I THOUGHT HE MIGHT'VE HAD SOME FEELINGS FOR ME, BUT EVER SINCE WE HOOKED UP HE'S TOTALLY AVOIDED ME! AND THEN HE WENT AND GOT ENGAGED!

ENGAGED? JUST A COUPLE OF WEEKS AFTER YOUR "FLING"? SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE DOESN'T TRUST HIMSELF!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


IT'S TEXTBOOK! HE'S DELIBERATELY DISTANCING HIMSELF FROM YOU BECAUSE HE KNOWS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN GIVEN HALF A CHANCE!
NO, I DON'T THINK SO, BECAUSE HE'S NOT DISTANCING HIMSELF ANYMORE! MY NEW POSITION AT WORK WILL PUT ME IN DAILY CONTACT WITH HIM!


INTERESTING! AND I DON'T SUPPOSE HE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS CHANGE IN POSITIONS, DID HE?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, HE DID!

GIRL! WAKE UP AND SMELL THE AFTERSHAVE! HE IS SO LOOKING TO "RE-FLING" WITH YOU, IT'S SCARY! GO FOR IT!

BUT... I KNOW HIS FIANCÉE, AND SHE'S PRETTY NICE, AND...!

AND SHE'S MORE WORTHY OF HIM THAN YOU, IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK?

NO... THAT'S NOT IT! BUT...!

THE WAY *I* SEE IT, YOU'VE GOT ***THREE*** CHOICES...

ONE, DO ***NOTHING*** AND YOU BOTH ***SUFFER*** IN SILENCE. ***TWO***, ***EXPOSE*** HIM FOR THE ***LECH*** HE IS ***BEFORE*** HE MARRIES YOUR FRIEND, ***OR...!***

OR...?


OR... BE DISCREET ABOUT IT! GET ALL THE AMAZING SEX AND OTHER PERKS FROM HIM WITHOUT ALL THE HASSLE OF BEING MARRIED! LET YOUR FRIEND HAVE THAT PART OF HIM!


YOU'RE EVIL, YOU KNOW THAT?
BIRDS OF A FEATHER, ROBIN... BIRDS OF A FEATHER!


YOU KNOW, ALL THIS TALK OF DECEPTION AND SEDUCTION IS GETTING ME ALL HOT AND BOTHERED! WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO ABOUT THAT?


C'MERE... AND I'LL SHOW YOU!

Monday morning, back in the office...

BUT THE WEDDING WAS ***TWO DAYS*** AGO! IT WAS HARD ***ENOUGH*** FLYING BACK WITHOUT YOU, BUT NOW YOU WANT TO STAY EVEN ***LONGER?*** ***WHY?***

HARLEY MADE THE MISTAKE OF GIVING STACY ***CARTE BLANCHE*** ON A NEW TRAVELING WARDROBE, SO SHE WANTS ***ME*** TO HELP HER PICK IT OUT BEFORE THEY LEAVE ON WEDNESDAY!

SO WHEN *WILL* YOU BE HOME?

PROBABLY NOT UNTIL *THURSDAY!* THINK YOU CAN *SURVIVE* WITHOUT ME THAT LONG?

I'M *TRYING*... BELIEVE ME! BUT IT'S *NOT* EASY!

POOR BABY! IF IT HELPS, I JUST EMAILED YOU ALL THE PHOTOS WE TOOK TOGETHER HERE IN ACAPULCO! *THAT* SHOULD KEEP YOU HAPPY UNTIL I GET BACK!


IT'S HARDLY THE SAME THING!
OOPS! STACY'S HERE! GOTTA GO, HONEY! I'LL CALL TOMORROW! BYE!


SIGH!
YEAH... BYE!


WELL, LET'S SEE WHICH ONES SHE SENT!

HMMM... IT **WAS** FUN, THOUGH! GOOD THING I TOOK SOME **ADNS** ALONG FOR THOSE **"SPECIAL"** OCCASIONS!

zn-sunny

OH, AND I'M SUPPOSED TO BE HAPPY THAT SHE'S PROBABLY **STILL** WEARING THAT ON THE BEACH... **2,000 MILES AWAY FROM ME!**

.....

zn-sunny

LIKE I DIDN'T **ALREADY** HAVE ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT!

.....

THANKS CELIA! **THANKS A LOT!**

zn-sunny

THANKS FOR WHAT?

OH... ROBIN! I... I DIDN'T SEE YOU COME IN!


I'M SORRY IF I STARTLED YOU, MR. MITCHELL! I WAS JUST CHECKING IF YOU WANTED ANY COFFEE OR ANYTHING!
NO THANK YOU, ROBIN... I'M FINE! SO, ARE YOU GETTING SETTLED IN OUT THERE?


OH YES! STACY MADE THE TRANSITION VERY EASY FOR ME! SHE LEFT DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON EVERY ASPECT OF THE JOB! THAT'S HOW I KNOW YOU ALWAYS TAKE COFFEE ABOUT THIS TIME EVERY DAY!

TRUE... I DO! BUT TODAY... I GUESS THE ***JET LAG*** HAS THROWN ME OFF SCHEDULE! AGAIN, I'M ***SORRY*** YOU COULDN'T MAKE THE TRIP WITH US, BUT UNTIL WE GET YOUR ***LEGAL ID*** TAKEN CARE OF...!

THAT'S ***OKAY,*** MR. MITCHELL! I ***TOTALLY*** UNDERSTAND! I JUST HOPE YOU ALL TOOK ***LOTS*** OF PICTURES!

AS A MATTER OF FACT, I WAS *JUST* LOOKING AT A FEW THAT CELIA EMAILED ME!

OH? SHE'S *STILL* IN ACAPULCO?

SIGH! **YES!** SHE DECIDED TO STICK AROUND FOR A FEW **MORE** DAYS!

OH! WELL, I GUESS **I** CAN UNDERSTAND THAT! SHE'S NEVER **TRAVELLED** MUCH... UNTIL **RECENTLY** THAT IS!

I GUESS I CAN'T **FAULT** HER FOR BEING **ENTHUSIASTIC!**


SO... ANY CHANCE I CAN SEE SOME OF THOSE PICTURES SHE SENT?
BY ALL MEANS!


OH... THEIR DRESSES ARE GORGEOUS! AND STACY LOOKS SO HAPPY!
OH, SHE WAS!
zn-sunny


AND OF COURSE, AS ALWAYS, YOU LOOKED VERY DASHING YOURSELF!
THANK YOU ROBIN!


OOPS!
zn-sunny
OH MY GOD!

I'D COMPLETELY ***FORGOTTEN*** THAT CELIA HAD TAKEN A ***PICTURE*** WHILE I WAS ON ***ADNS!*** IF ROBIN ***RECOGNIZES*** ME...?!

I'LL BET *HE* DIDN'T KNOW *THAT* ONE WAS THERE! I *COULD* TRY AND *PRETEND* I DON'T *RECOGNIZE* HIM, BUT SEEING HIM AGAIN LIKE *THAT*... *WHEW!* I DON'T THINK I'D BE VERY *CONVINCING!*

GUESS THERE'S ONLY **ONE** WAY TO PLAY THIS AND **HOPEFULLY** ALLOW HIM TO SAVE FACE...!

WAIT A MINUTE! THAT'S... **MITCH...!**

...MR. MITCHELL...?!

I... I CAN *EXPLAIN,* ROBIN! IT *WASN'T* WHAT YOU THINK...!


THAT'S OKAY, MITCH... UH, DAVID... I MEAN, MR. MITCHELL! I REMEMBER EVERYTHING ABOUT THAT NIGHT AND NOW IT ALL MAKES PERFECT SENSE!

YOU WERE THERE HOPING TO SURPRISE CELIA, BUT WHEN I TOLD YOU MY FRIEND HAD LEFT WITH ANOTHER GUY, YOU THOUGHT I WAS TALKING ABOUT CELIA!

NO WONDER YOU WERE SO UPSET!

AND THEN... **OH MY!** THE WAY I **THREW MYSELF** AT YOU! WHAT YOU MUST **THINK** OF ME! AT LEAST **NOW** I KNOW **WHY** YOU NEVER CALLED!

ROBIN, I... I **DON'T** KNOW WHAT TO SAY!

YOU KNOW... I THINK I WAS STANDING RIGHT ABOUT ***THERE*** WHEN I WAS ***GUSHING*** ABOUT ***"MITCH"***... TO ***YOU!*** I MUST'VE SOUNDED PRETTY ***SILLY!***

ON THE ***CONTRARY,*** ROBIN! I WAS DEEPLY ***FLATTERED*** LISTENING TO YOU THAT DAY! I ONLY ***WISH*** I COULD'VE TOLD YOU THE TRUTH BACK ***THEN*** INSTEAD OF YOU FINDING OUT ***LIKE THIS!*** YOU MUST BE VERY ***DISAPPOINTED*** IN ME!

zn-sunny


YOU WERE ANYTHING BUT DISAPPOINTING! I STILL GET GOOSEBUMPS EVERY TIME I THINK ABOUT THAT NIGHT... AND I HAVE TO ADMIT, I THINK ABOUT IT A LOT!
SO... YOU STILL HAVE NO REGRETS ABOUT THAT NIGHT... KNOWING NOW THAT IT WAS ME?

NONE WHATSOEVER... AS LONG AS CELIA NEVER FINDS OUT! WHAT ABOUT YOU?

FUNNY... NOW THAT YOU KNOW THE TRUTH AND THERE ARE NO LONGER ANY SECRETS BETWEEN US, I FIND THAT I TOO HAVE NO REGRETS!

AND REST ASSURED, CELIA WILL NEVER HEAR OF THIS FROM ME!


ME EITHER!
THEN WE'RE IN AGREEMENT?


COMPLETELY...!

OH, THIS IS PERFECT! JUST PERFECT!

zn-sunny

I *KNEW* ROBIN WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO KEEP AWAY FROM DAVID AFTER OUR LITTLE DISCUSSION! *THANK GOD!* NOW *I* WON'T HAVE TO SEDUCE THE OLD GOAT!

EVEN THOUGH I'VE GONE THOUGH THE *SAME* TRANSFORMATION, IT'S STILL *HARD* FOR ME TO *COMPREHEND* THAT SHE *ACTUALLY* HAS THE DESIRE TO SLEEP WITH *GUYS*... AND THAT *MITCHELL* TURNS HER ON!

THE THOUGHT OF TOUCHING *HIM* MAKES ME *QUEASY!*

CRAP!

Thunk!

GASP! SOMEONE'S COMING!

OH! I DIDN'T MEAN TO INTERRUPT ANYTHING! MAEVE WANTED ME TO DELIVER THESE DOCUMENTS!

NO... IT'S OKAY, AMBER! WE WERE JUST FINISHING UP! RIGHT, ROBIN?


YES, I'LL, UMM... GET ON THAT RIGHT AWAY, MR. MITCHELL!

WHEW! **WHAT** JUST ALMOST **HAPPENED** IN THERE? I WAS JUST PLANNING ON **PLAYING DUMB,** BUT... WE **ALMOST...!**


I THINK AMBER WAS RIGHT ABOUT DAVID AFTER ALL!


Later that day...
SO... YOU DIDN'T TELL ME YOUR "FLING" WAS WITH THE CEO! NICE JOB, GIRL! SORRY I INTERRUPTED!


NO, IT'S NOT A "NICE JOB" AND I'M GLAD YOU INTERRUPTED US! THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT, THE MORE I REALIZE HOW CRAZY IT WAS, AND THAT THERE CAN NEVER BE ANYTHING BETWEEN HIM AND ME!
FROM WHAT I SAW, THERE WASN'T ENOUGH ROOM FOR ANYTHING BETWEEN YOU... EXCEPT FOR A FEW LAYERS OF CLOTHING, THAT IS!

IT'S **NOT** WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE! WE WERE JUST **TALKING**... CLEARING THE AIR OVER SOME **PERSONAL** THINGS AND, AND... THINGS JUST GOT A LITTLE...!

HOT! YEAH, I COULD FEEL THE **HEAT** FROM YOU TWO THE SECOND I STEPPED INTO THE ROOM! NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, **THAT** IS ONE MAN YOU HAVE **GOT** TO KEEP HOLD OF! EVEN IF IT'S ONLY ON THE **SLY!** TRUST ME! I **KNOW** WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!

YOU KNOW, A FEW WEEKS AGO I'D HAVE ***AGREED*** WITH YOU, BUT THAT'S ***NOT*** WHO I AM ANYMORE! EVEN IF HE ***WASN'T*** MY BOSS, HE'S ***ENGAGED***... TO MY ***FRIEND!*** IT JUST ***WOULDN'T*** BE RIGHT!

WELL, SUIT YOURSELF! BUT I ***STILL*** THINK LETTING HIM OFF THE HOOK IS A ***BIG MISTAKE!***

SIGH!
MAYBE SO, BUT WHY THE ***HELL*** CAN'T I JUST FIND A RELATIONSHIP I ***DON'T*** HAVE TO ***HIDE*** FROM ANYONE?

oooo


HELLO, ROBIN!
WELL, HELLO MR. CHAMBERS! HOW ARE YOU TODAY? IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?

I'M JUST FINE, ROBIN! AND ***PLEASE***, CALL ME ***STEVEN!***

DAVID AND I FINISHED UP IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM AND I WAS LOOKING FOR MY ***NIECE!*** SHE'S NOT AT HER DESK... HAVE ***YOU*** SEEN HER?

YES, AS A MATTER OF FACT, SHE ***JUST*** WENT THAT WAY! YOU CAN PROBABLY CATCH HER IF YOU HURRY!


THANK YOU, ROBIN!
YOU'RE VERY WELCOME, STEVEN!


HMMM! I WONDER IF HE TAKES ADNS?

JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW THAT YOU'RE DOING A ***GREAT*** JOB! I JUST LEFT DAVID AND SOMETHING, OR ***SOMEONE,*** HAS GOT HIM ***RATTLED!*** HE'S BACK TO WHERE WE ***WANT*** HIM!

I WISH ***I*** COULD TAKE THE CREDIT, BUT IT'S NOT ME... IT'S ***ROBIN!***


ROBIN?!
YEAH! I WALKED IN ON THEM EARLIER AND FROM THE WAY THEY REACTED, YOU'D HAVE THOUGHT I CAUGHT THEM IN THE ACT! SHE CLAIMS THERE'S NOTHING GOING ON BUT WE BOTH KNOW THEIR HISTORY! THERE'S STILL HEAT THERE... WHETHER THEY WANT IT OR NOT!


NO WONDER DAVID SEEMED SO WORRIED ABOUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FIANCÉE! HE DOESN'T TRUST HIMSELF!
HE'S NOT CALLING OFF THE WEDDING, IS HE?

ON THE **CONTRARY!** AFTER A FEW REASSURING AND **MOTIVATIONAL** WORDS FROM HIS **OLD FRIEND,** HE'S SPEEDING DOWN TO **ACAPULCO** RIGHT NOW TO **TIE THE KNOT** WITH CELIA! AND **WITHOUT** A **PRE-NUP!**

PERFECT! STAGE ONE **COMPLETE!** WITHOUT A **PRE-NUP,** IF... OR SHOULD I SAY **WHEN** SHE **DIVORCES** HIM...!

SHE'LL GET **HALF THE COMPANY!**

HAVING **ROBIN** AS DAVID'S SEDUCER IS SO MUCH **BETTER!** CELIA WILL BE UTTERLY **DEVASTATED** ONCE SHE LEARNS THAT HER HUSBAND IS **CHEATING** WITH HER **BEST FRIEND**... AND **FORMER HUSBAND!** SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO SELL OFF HER PART OF THE COMPANY FAST ENOUGH IN ORDER TO DISTANCE HERSELF FROM HIM! AND, OF COURSE, **I'LL** BE THERE TO **HAPPILY** PAY HER **TOP DOLLAR** FOR HER SHARES!

IT MAY **NOT** BE ALL THAT **EASY,** THOUGH!

I DON'T **WANT** TO HEAR TALK LIKE **THAT!**

YOU DON'T **GET** IT! ROBIN'S **DETERMINED** TO **BURY** WHATEVER FEELINGS SHE HAS FOR MITCHELL! I THINK SHE'S TRYING TO **ATONE** FOR HER PAST **INDISCRETIONS!**

WELL THEN IT'S UP TO **YOU** TO CONVINCE HER **OTHERWISE!**

AND WHILE *YOU'RE* DOING THAT, I THINK *I* KNOW A WAY TO MOTIVATE *DAVID* TO *"REDEFINE"* HIS *MARRIAGE VOWS!*

REALLY? *HOW?*


BY APPEALING TO HIS COMPETITIVE NATURE!

And at that particular moment...

OH MY GOD! YOU'RE NOT KIDDING, ARE YOU?

HE SURPRISED ME, TOO! HE CALLED EN ROUTE TO THE AIRPORT AND SAID WE WERE GETTING MARRIED TONIGHT! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?


THAT... THAT'S WONDERFUL, CELIA! I'M SO HAPPY FOR YOU... FOR THE BOTH OF YOU!
I'M SURPRISED HE DIDN'T TELL YOU! YOU ARE HIS SECRETARY AFTER ALL!

I'M NOT SURPRISED! NOT IN THE LEAST!

MAYBE HE THOUGHT I'D CALL YOU FIRST AND SPOIL THE SURPRISE!

THAT'S PROBABLY IT! WELL, I'VE GOT SO MANY THINGS TO DO BEFORE HE GETS HERE! I WISH YOU COULD BE HERE WITH ME, HONEY!


I DO TOO! BUT I UNDERSTAND! SEE YOU WHEN YOU GET BACK!


A FEW HOURS AGO, HE WAS HOT AND HEAVY WITH ME IN HIS OFFICE, BUT THIS AFTERNOON HE'S FLYING OFF TO MEXICO TO MARRY MY EX!
REALLY, DAVID?!
zn-sunny
zn-sunny

YOU LOOK **ANNOYED,** ROBIN! ANYTHING WRONG?

OH, UMMM... **NO!** I JUST FOUND OUT THAT MR. MITCHELL AND CELIA ARE GETTING **MARRIED** THIS AFTERNOON IN ACAPULCO! IT JUST CAUGHT ME OFF GUARD, **THAT'S** ALL!


SO, ARE YOU FLYING DOWN FOR THE CEREMONY?
NO, I'M AFRAID I DON'T HAVE MY PASSPORT UP TO DATE!
zn-sunny


THAT'S TOO BAD! SAY, HOW ABOUT I MAKE IT UP TO YOU BY TAKING YOU OUT TO DINNER TONIGHT?
TAKE ME OUT? LIKE... ON A DATE?


OF COURSE! WHAT DO YOU SAY? I KNOW SOME OF THE BEST CHEFS IN TOWN!
I... I'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH, STEVEN!


GREAT! I'LL PICK YOU UP AT 7:30 SHARP! SEE YOU THEN, ROBIN!

WOW! A DATE! AN ACTUAL DATE! NO HOOKING UP IN A CLUB... NO GRABBING A LITTLE BEHIND OFFICE DOORS... AN ACTUAL, OUT IN THE OPEN DATE!

.....

zn-sunny

zn-sunny


I THINK I COULD GET USED TO THAT!

Later that week...

I HAD A ***WONDERFUL*** TIME TONIGHT, STEVEN! THAT MAKES IT ***THREE*** NIGHTS IN A ROW! YOU'RE GOING TO ***SPOIL*** ME!

YOU'RE ***WORTH*** SPOILING, ROBIN! IT'S NOT VERY OFTEN AN OLD FOGEY LIKE ***ME*** GETS TO SPEND TIME WITH SUCH A ***LOVELY*** AND ***INTELLIGENT*** YOUNG WOMAN LIKE YOURSELF!

HMPH! WHEN *I* THINK OF AN *OLD FOGEY*, I VISUALIZE AN *ANGRY OLD MAN* WHO'S CONTENT TO *WINDING DOWN HIS LIFE* FALLING ASLEEP ON THE SOFA WATCHING *BAD TV!*

AND AS FAR AS *I* CAN TELL, *THAT* DOESN'T DESCRIBE *ANYONE* IN THIS ROOM!


BESIDES, ANY WOMAN, YOUNG OR OLD, WOULD COUNT HERSELF LUCKY TO SPEND TIME WITH A HANDSOME, INTELLIGENT AND SUCCESSFUL MAN LIKE YOU!
WOW! YOU REALLY MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR A MAN TO SAY GOOD NIGHT!


THEN DON'T!
YOU ARE A STRAIGHT FORWARD LITTLE THING, AREN'T YOU?

I'VE LEARNED THE **HARD** WAY THAT IF YOU DON'T ACT **DECISIVELY** ON WHAT YOU WANT, **LIFE** MAY THROW YOU IN A DIRECTION THAT MAKES ALL YOUR HOPES AND DREAMS **NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE!**

AND **THIS** IS WHAT YOU **REALLY** WANT?


PLEASE DON'T MISUNDERSTAND ME, STEVEN! THIS ISN'T JUST ABOUT SEX! IF IT WAS, I'D JUST GO TO ANY CLUB AND FIND SOME GUY TO FILL THAT NEED!
THEN WHAT IS IT YOU DO WANT, ROBIN?

I FEEL THIS ***CONNECTION*** WITH YOU, STEVEN! YOU'RE A ***SPECIAL*** KIND OF MAN... STRONG, ***DECISIVE***, YET CARING! YOU MIGHT THINK I'M ***TOO YOUNG*** TO UNDERSTAND SUCH THINGS, BUT I'M ***NOT!*** HONESTLY!

GUYS ***MY*** AGE ARE SO ***BORING!*** GIVE ME A MAN WHO'S ***ALREADY*** MADE HIS MARK IN THE WORLD, A ***CONFIDENT*** MAN WHO CAN TAKE ***CONTROL*** OF EVERY SITUATION, A ***VIRILE*** MAN WHO ***DARES*** TO GO AFTER ***ANYTHING HE WANTS***!

EVER SINCE THE DAY WE MET, I'VE BEEN THINKING THAT ***YOU'RE*** SOMEONE WHO I... I WANT TO...


I WANT YOU TO MAKE LOVE TO ME, STEVEN! I WANT TO FEEL YOUR HEART BEAT CLOSELY AGAINST MINE! I WANT TO WAKE UP IN THE MORNING WRAPPED SAFELY IN YOUR ARMS! I'VE NEVER WANTED THAT FROM ANY MAN BEFORE... AT LEAST, NOT UNTIL I MET YOU!
WHEW! YOU... YOU REALLY FEEL THAT WAY ABOUT ME?


I DO!


THEN WHO AM I TO DISAPPOINT?



The next day...


HEY YOU!
CELIA!


WELL, HEY THERE YOURSELF... MRS. MITCHELL! I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU NEWLYWEDS HOME SO SOON!
WELL, DAVID SAYS WE'LL TAKE AN EXTENDED HONEYMOON SOME OTHER TIME! SINCE THE WEDDING WAS SO SPUR OF THE MOMENT, WE DIDN'T BOTHER MAKING ANY OTHER TRAVEL PLANS!


SO... HOW'S IT FEEL? BEING A NEWLYWED AGAIN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!
TRUTHFULLY? IT'S A BIT OF A LETDOWN! I MEAN, I KNOW IT'S MY SECOND MARRIAGE AND HIS FOURTH, BUT...!


BUT WHAT?
MAYBE I'M JUST BEING OVERLY SENSITIVE, BUT IT SEEMED THAT DAVID'S HEART WASN'T INTO THIS! ALMOST LIKE HE WAS DOING IT BECAUSE HE HAD TO!

OH, I'M, UH... ***SURE*** THAT'S NOT WHAT'S GOING ON!

OH MY GOD! IT CERTAINLY SOUNDS LIKE DAVID ***DID*** RUSH INTO THE WEDDING BECAUSE OF WHAT ***ALMOST*** HAPPENED BETWEEN ***US***! BUT... I CERTAINLY HOPE THAT'S ***NOT*** THE CASE! NOT ANYMORE... NOT AFTER MEETING ***STEVEN!***


SO, WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO WHILE I'VE BEEN GONE? ANY JUICY GOSSIP?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'VE BEEN SEEING SOMEONE... ON A REGULAR BASIS!


YOU'RE KIDDING! WHO IS IT?!
IT'S MR. CHAMBERS... STEVEN! WE'VE SEEN QUITE A BIT OF EACH OTHER THIS WEEK! AND IT'S GOING VERY WELL!


STEVEN? **REALLY?** OH ROBIN, THAT'S **WONDERFUL**! I'M **SO HAPPY** FOR YOU!
I'M PRETTY HAPPY FOR MYSELF, TOO! IT SEEMS LIKE MY NEW LIFE IS **FINALLY** STARTING TO **NORMALIZE!**


WELL, YOU'LL HAVE TO FILL ME IN ON ALL THE DETAILS LATER! I'M MEETING DAVID FOR LUNCH!
OKAY CELIA! I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER!


HMMM... SINCE SHE PRETTY MUCH ELOPED, CELIA NEVER GOT A BACHELORETTE PARTY! I THINK MAEVE AND I NEED TO DO SOMETHING TO REMEDY THAT OVERSIGHT!

A few moments later just outside Maeve's office...

I WONDER WHO ***ELSE*** WE COULD INVITE! NONE OF OUR ***OLD*** FRIENDS, ***THAT'S*** FOR SURE! I WONDER IF ***AMBER*** WOULD LIKE TO COME?

NO, WE'RE ***NOT*** GOING TO TALK ABOUT THIS ***LATER***. WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT IT ***RIGHT NOW!***

EVERYTHING WAS SET UP ***PERFECTLY!*** ***I*** WASN'T GOING TO HAVE TO SEDUCE THE ***OLD FART!*** WE WERE GONNA LEAVE THAT TO ***ROBIN!***

WHAT?!

HAVEN'T YOU BEEN **LISTENING** TO ME? JUST BECAUSE I'VE GOT A FEMALE **BODY** NOW, IT **DOESN'T** MEAN I'M ABOUT TO LET SOME GUY STICK HIS DICK INSIDE ME! THE **TRUTH** IS, I'M **STILL** THE SAME **BABE-HOUND** ON THE INSIDE I'VE **ALWAYS** BEEN!

LIKE I TOLD YOU BEFORE, THE ONLY REASON ***SHE*** SWITCHED SIDES IS BECAUSE OF ALL THE ***PHEROMONES*** AND PSYCHOTROPHIC ***DRUGS*** I DOSED HER WITH!

OH MY GOD! IT... IT'S SIMON!!

...

YOU KNOW WHAT *I* THINK IS GOING ON? I THINK YOU'VE ***FALLEN*** FOR HER! THAT ***DYNAMITE BODY***... THAT SWEET, ***ALLURING SMILE***... ***YOU*** WANT HER FOR ***YOURSELF, DON'T YOU?***

OKAY, *FINE!* I'LL MEET YOU AFTER WORK AND WE CAN *DISCUSS* IT FURTHER. BUT IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD! I'M *NOT* CHANGING MY MIND!


OH MY GOD!
SHE... SHE'S
SIMON!
STEVEN'S "NIECE"
IS REALLY
SIMON!


HE MANAGED TO TRICK ME... AND SEDUCE ME AGAIN! JUST WHEN I THOUGHT I WAS FINALLY FREE OF THAT PSYCHOPATH... I AM SUCH AN IDIOT!

AND... THIS MEANS **STEVEN'S** INVOLVED, TOO!

GOD! HOW COULD I BE SO **GULLIBLE?** I... I **REALLY** THOUGHT HE **CARED** ABOUT ME!

Moments later, back at her desk...

JESUS! WHAT AM I GOING TO **DO?** I NEED TO **TELL** SOMEONE ABOUT **SIMON AND STEVEN!** BUT WITHOUT ANY **PROOF,** AND CONSIDERING MY **TRACK RECORD,** NO ONE WOULD **BELIEVE** ME!

EVEN **CELIA** WOULD PROBABLY THINK I WAS **DELUSIONAL!**


WHAT'S UP, HONEY? YOU LOOK SO UPSET!
OH, UMMM... NOTHING! JUST LOST IN THOUGHT, THAT'S ALL! ARE YOU LEAVING SO SOON? I THOUGHT YOU TWO WERE HAVING LUNCH TOGETHER!


I THOUGHT SO TOO, BUT DAVID SAID HE HAD A MEETING TO GO TO!
HE DOES? I MUST'VE FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT!


I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, BUT I TOLD HIM ALL ABOUT YOU AND STEVEN!
YOU DID? WHAT DID HE SAY?


NOT MUCH, REALLY! HE SEEMED MORE SURPRISED THAN ANYTHING ELSE!
I'LL BET!


WELL, I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER, HONEY! BYE!
YEAH... BYE, CELIA!


SO... HOW THE HELL CAN I PROVE WHAT I KNOW ABOUT "AMBER" AND STEVEN?
....
ROBIN, COULD I SEE YOU, PLEASE?

OF COURSE, MR. MITCHELL! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!

AND WHAT, IF ANYTHING, DO I TELL DAVID?


MR. MITCHELL? ARE YOU HERE?

OVER HERE, ROBIN!

GASP! MR. MITCHELL? WHY... WHY ARE YOU LIKE THAT?

I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM LIKE THAT SINCE THAT NIGHT AT THE CLUB! WHEW! I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN HOW HOT "MITCH" WAS!


I'M SORRY IF I CAUGHT YOU OFF GUARD, ROBIN! CELIA AND I HAD... "PLANS", SO TO SPEAK, BUT SHE HAD SOMETHING COME UP!
CELIA GOT CALLED AWAY? THAT'S NOT WHAT SHE TOLD ME! WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, DAVID?
I... I UNDERSTAND, MR. MITCHELL! SO... WHAT DID YOU NEED TO SEE ME ABOUT?

I THOUGHT WE SHOULD... ***TALK***, SINCE WE SORT OF LEFT THINGS ***UNRESOLVED*** THE OTHER DAY RIGHT BEFORE I...!

RIGHT BEFORE YOU ***ELOPED*** WITH ***CELIA!***


YES, THAT WAS RATHER IMPULSIVE OF ME, WASN'T IT?
TO SAY THE LEAST!


THAT'S SORT OF WHAT I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT! I NOW REALIZE THERE ARE THINGS THAT WE SHOULD HAVE DISCUSSED... COME TO TERMS WITH... BEFORE I MADE SUCH A HUGE COMMITMENT TO CELIA!
SUCH AS...?


OUR HISTORY TOGETHER! WHAT WE SHARED THAT NIGHT AT THE CLUB... AND THE FEELINGS WE OBVIOUSLY STILL HAVE FOR EACH OTHER!
OH, DAVID! PLEASE TELL ME YOU'RE NOT DOING WHAT I THINK YOU'RE DOING!
BUT FOR CELIA'S SAKE, WE SHOULD PUT THEM ASIDE! RIGHT?

BUT IS **HIDING** OUR FEELINGS THE **BEST** WAY TO GO? SHOULDN'T WE BE **HONEST** WITH OURSELVES AND **DISCOVER** WHAT THOSE FEELINGS REALLY **MEAN** BEFORE WE ABANDON THEM **FOREVER?**

OH MY GOD! **HONESTLY,** DAVID, I THOUGHT YOU WERE **BETTER** THAN THIS!


AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE WE DO THAT, DAVID?
AS IF I DIDN'T KNOW!

MAYBE WE NEED TO ***EXPLORE*** THOSE FEELINGS... MAYBE EVEN TRY TO ***RECREATE*** THEM... SEE WHERE THAT LEADS US!

OHHH... DAVID! ***WHY*** DID YOU RUSH OFF AND GET MARRIED IF ***THIS*** IS WHAT YOU HAD IN MIND? I DON'T KNOW ***WHY*** STEVEN AND SIMON WANT CELIA TO ***DIVORCE*** YOU, BUT IF YOU KEEP GOING LIKE ***THIS,*** YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE THEM ***EXACTLY*** WHAT THEY WANT!

CELIA WILL PUT UP WITH ***MANY*** FAULTS IN A HUSBAND, BUT I DON'T THINK BEING A ***PHILANDERER*** IS ONE OF THEM!

WHILE *I'VE* BEEN WORRYING ABOUT SAVING *YOUR* COMPANY, THE ONLY THING *YOU* SEEM CONCERNED ABOUT IS REIGNITING AN *AFFAIR* WITH ME... LESS THAN A *WEEK* AFTER YOUR *WEDDING!*

MAYBE CELIA *NEEDS* TO FIND OUT WHAT A *WEAK-WILLED* AND *DUPLICITOUS* SON OF A BITCH YOU *REALLY* ARE! MAYBE THAT'S *EXACTLY* WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN HERE... EVEN IF IT *DOES* GIVE STEVEN AND SIMON *EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT!*

I'M **SICK** AND FUCKING **TIRED** OF PEOPLE MANIPULATING **ME** FOR THEIR OWN **PERSONAL GAIN!** SIMON, STEVEN AND NOW **DAVID**... THEY'VE **ALL** JUST BEEN **USING** ME FROM THE GET-GO!


SO, IF YOU BOYS CAN'T KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF ME... FINE! I'LL PLAY YOUR GAME! BUT IT'S TIME I CHANGED THE RULES!


YOU'RE RIGHT, DAVID! THESE FEELINGS WE HAVE ARE JUST TOO STRONG TO IGNORE! I'VE TRIED TO RESTRAIN MYSELF, BUT I JUST CAN'T ANY LONGER!


I HAVE TO HAVE YOU... FEEL YOU INSIDE ME AGAIN! AND I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES! PLEASE, DAVID!
OHHH... ROBIN...!





An extended interlude later...

SO... WHAT ARE YOU THINKNG?

MMMMM! I'M THINKING OF HOW ***WONDERFUL*** MY LIFE IS NOW! ALL THE FUN... ALL THE ***PLEASURE*** I'VE ENJOYED IN THIS NEW BODY... ***COURTESY OF YOU!***

ME?! YOU... YOU MEAN CELIA TOLD YOU WHAT WE DID?

CELIA? WHAT THE HELL? I WAS ONLY REFERRING TO THE COMPANY AS BEING THE SOURCE OF F-RHO-DT! IT SEEMS THERE'S YET ANOTHER SECRET THAT I DON'T KNOW!


LET'S SEE IF HE'LL TELL ME MORE!
OF COURSE! CELIA AND I HAVE NO SECRETS FROM ONE ANOTHER! WELL... I GUESS WE DO NOW, DON'T WE? *GIGGLE!*
I'M SURPRISED! SHE WAS SO WORRIED YOU MIGHT ONE DAY FIND OUT WHAT SHE DID! IT MUST'VE JUST WEIGHED ON HER TOO MUCH TO KEEP FROM YOU! I HOPE SHE TOLD YOU IT WAS ALL MY DECISION TO HAVE HER DOUBLE DOSE YOU WITH THE F-RHO-DT!


ROBIN? DID SHE TELL YOU THAT?
A DOUBLE-DOSE? SO IT WASN'T JUST MY OWN INEPT BEHAVIOR THAT CAUSED ME TO CHANGE GENDERS? THEY DID THIS TO ME DELIBERATELY... AND CELIA WAS IN ON IT! EVEN CELIA...!


NO! YOU KNOW SWEET CELIA... SHE DIDN'T WANT TO IMPLICATE YOU! BUT I'M GLAD I KNOW THE TRUTH! IT EXPLAINS THE CONNECTION WE HAVE! YOUR APPRECIATION FOR ME... AND THIS BODY YOU GAVE ME!
AND I DO SO APPRECIATE IT... AND YOU!


YOU WANTED TO KNOW **WHERE** THIS WOULD LEAD US AND **NOW WE KNOW!** WE OBVIOUSLY **CAN'T** GIVE EACH OTHER UP! BUT I DON'T MIND **SHARING** YOU WITH CELIA! AS LONG AS **I** GET WHAT I'VE GOT RIGHT **NOW,** I'M HAPPY!
AND JUST **WHAT** WOULD **THAT** BE?


THE MAN I *THREW MYSELF* AT THE NIGHT AT CLUB PARADOX... THE MAN I HAVEN'T STOPPED *FANTASIZING* ABOUT SINCE...!


THE MAN WHO IS... OOOOO!... FILLING MY EVERY WANTON NEED!
I WANT "MITCH"! CELIA CAN HAVE DAVID, BUT MITCH IS ALL MINE!


THINK YOU CAN LIVE WITH THAT ARRANGEMENT... MITCH?
MMMMMMM... I THINK I CAN AGREE TO THOSE TERMS!

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT! NOW... WHAT SAY WE SEAL THIS DEAL! HMMM?



A Tangled Web

Chapter Eleven

by CBlack

The next day, in the office of Jerry Schwarz, middle-management yutz...


HI JERRY! YOU BUSY?
ROBIN? WE DON'T SEE YOU VERY OFTEN DOWN HERE! WHAT'S UP?

WELL, MR. MITCHELL IS ***REDISTRIBUTING*** SOME OF ***SIMON'S*** PROJECTS THAT MAEVE DIDN'T WANT! SO WE'RE JUST KIND OF SPLITTING THEM UP AT RANDOM AND ***THIS*** ONE'S ***YOURS!***


WHAT PROJECT IS IT?
NOT A CLUE! BUT EVERYTHING YOU NEED, HIS NOTES, SAMPLES, WHATEVER... SHOULD BE IN THERE!


GREAT... THANKS, ROBIN!
HAVE FUN, JERRY!


HMPH! LET'S SEE WHAT THEY'VE DUMPED INTO MY LAP THIS TIME!

HOLY SHIT! NO WONDER THAT SON OF A BITCH GOT SO MUCH PUSSY! THE RUMORS ABOUT WHAT SIMON WAS WORKING ON ARE TOTALLY TRUE!

MY GOD! IT SAYS HERE THIS STUFF NOT ONLY HAS THE CAPACITY TO MAKE A WOMAN EXTREMELY HORNY, BUT ALSO EXTREMELY SUGGESTIBLE! COULD IT POSSIBLY WORK?

"LONG AND REPEATED EXPOSURE?" SHIT! I SHOULD'VE KNOWN THERE'D BE A **DEALBREAKER** IN HERE SOMEWHERE! THE ONLY WOMAN **I** HAVE REPEATED EXPOSURE TO IS THE **BUS DRIVER,** AND THE **LAST** THING ON EARTH I'D WANT TO DO IS MAKE **HER** HORNY!

UMMM... MR. **SCHWARZ?**

HOLY...!

UM, **YEAH!** **I'M** JERRY SCHWARZ! CAN I **HELP** YOU, MISS...?

COOPER! **AMBER** COOPER! IT SEEMS **I'M** YOUR NEW **SECRETARY!**

MY... MY SECRETARY? YOU? WOW!

SOMEONE UP THERE MUST REALLY LIKE ME!

YEAH... WHATEVER!


THIS TOTALLY SUCKS! JUST BECAUSE I WON'T DO STEVEN'S BIDDING, HE GETS ME DEMOTED DOWN TO THIS SHIT-HOLE? SCHWARZ IS A BOTTOM-FEEDER!
THERE'S NO WAY I'M PUTTING UP WITH IT! I'LL RAISE HOLY HELL WITH STEVEN... AS SOON AS I CAN GET HIM TO RETURN MY CALL, THAT IS! THE ASSHOLE IS DODGING ME!


WELL, COME ON IN, AMBER AND GET COMFORTABLE! I'M SURE WE'LL GET ALONG JUST FINE!

A few minutes later, on the other side of the building...

AMBER? COULD YOU COME IN HERE, PLEASE?


AMBER? ARE YOU OUT THERE?
NOW WHERE THE HELL DID SHE RUN OFF TO THIS TIME?


HEY, MAEVE!
HI, ROBIN! DID YOU SEE AMBER OUT THERE?
NO... THAT'S WHAT I CAME BY TO TELL YOU! SHE GOT REASSIGNED!


REASSIGNED? JUST LIKE THAT? JEEZ! NOT THAT I'LL MISS HER! SHE WAS LAZY AND HAD WAY TOO MUCH ATTITUDE!
SO, HOW LONG UNTIL I GET A REPLACEMENT FOR HER?
I'M SO GLAD YOU ASKED!
RANDY, COULD YOU STEP IN HERE PLEASE?

MAEVE, **THIS** IS RANDY... **YOUR** NEW ASSISTANT! SAY **HELLO,** RANDY!

HI, MAEVE!

THANKS, RANDY! GO ON BACK OUT THERE TO YOUR NEW DESK AND GET SITUATED!




WOOF! WHERE DID HE COME FROM?
THE GREEDY OLD BAT WHO HEADS UP HR HAD HIM STASHED AWAY RUNNING ERRANDS FOR HER!


YOU'RE THE BEST! YOU KNOW THAT?
HEY, WHAT'S THE USE OF BEING ASSISTANT TO THE CEO IF YOU CAN'T ABUSE THE POWER TO HELP OUT YOUR FRIENDS?


AND BELIEVE ME... I ENJOYED DOING THIS A LOT MORE THAN YOU MIGHT THINK!

That night, at Steven Chamber's house...


NOW, TELL ME THE TRUTH... WOULD YOU REALLY RATHER HAVE GONE OUT TO A STUFFY AND INSANELY EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT INSTEAD OF STAYING IN LIKE THIS?
CONSIDERING ANY RESTAURANT WOULD'VE QUICKLY KICKED US OUT FOR ATTEMPTING WHAT WE'VE DONE HERE TONIGHT, I CAN SAFELY SAY I'M HAPPY WE STAYED IN!


YOU KNOW, THERE ARE STILL A FEW ROOMS IN THIS MANSION OF YOURS WE HAVEN'T "CHRISTENED" YET! READY TO CONTINUE NOW THAT WE'VE HAD OUR DINNER BREAK?
DAMN, WOMAN! YOU'RE GONNA KILL ME, YOU KNOW THAT?


DON'T EVEN JOKE ABOUT THAT! I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT NOT HAVING YOU IN MY LIFE!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT, DARLIN'! YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME FOR THE LONG HAUL!


MMMM... I'M COUNTING ON IT!
SO IF YOU'LL JUST GIVE ME A FEW MORE MINUTES TO RECOUP, WE CAN GET STARTED ON THE UPSTAIRS!


YOU KNOW, I THINK THERE ARE SOME ROOMS UP THERE I HAVEN'T BEEN IN FOR YEARS!
I CAN'T IMAGINE LIVING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS BY YOURSELF! DON'T YOU GET LONELY?


OH, I HAVE NO *INTENTION* OF LIVING HERE ALONE *ANYMORE!*
WH... WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING,* STEVEN?
I'M SAYING I THINK YOU SHOULD GIVE UP THAT *APARTMENT* OF YOURS AND MOVE IN HERE *WITH ME!*

OH, THAT SOUNDS **WONDERFUL**, STEVEN, BUT HOW WILL THAT **LOOK?** A **SECRETARY** SHACKING UP WITH ONE OF THE **MAJOR STOCKHOLDERS?** TONGUES WOULD BE **WAGGING!**

TRUE! BUT UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, **"SHACKING UP"** IS WHAT **UNMARRIED** COUPLES DO!

YES, BUT...!

OH MY GOD, STEVEN! DID YOU JUST...? DID YOU ASK ME TO...?

IN MY OWN ROUNDABOUT WAY... YES, I DID! SO... WHAT DO YOU SAY, ROBIN? WILL YOU MARRY ME?

OH **YES,** STEVEN! OF **COURSE** I WILL! NOTHING COULD **POSSIBLY** MAKE ME ANY **HAPPIER!**

I DID IT! I PLAYED THE **PLAYER** AND TOTALLY **HOOKED** HIM! I'M GOING TO BE **SET FOR LIFE!**

THEN IT'S **SETTLED!** WE CAN ASK **DAVID** AND **CELIA** TO BE **WITNESSES,** AND...!

UMMM... CAN'T WE ASK SOMEBODY **ELSE** TO BE OUR WITNESSES?

WELL, **SURE** WE CAN! BUT **WHY?**

SIGH! I GUESS I ***SHOULD'VE*** TOLD YOU THIS ALREADY, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO BRING IT UP!

BRING UP ***WHAT,*** LOVE?

IT'S ***DAVID!*** YOU SEE... HE AND I HAD A BRIEF... ***ENCOUNTER*** BEFORE HE AND CELIA GOT MARRIED!

WISH I COULD TELL HER I **ALREADY** KNOW **ALL** ABOUT IT... SAVE HER THE TROUBLE! BUT **STILL**... IT'LL BE INTERESTING TO HEAR **HER** SIDE OF IT ALL!

BUT THAT WAS **BEFORE** THEY WERE MARRIED AND BEFORE **WE** EVEN **MET!** SO I DON'T SEE ANY **PROBLEM!** UNLESS THERE ARE **STILL** FEELINGS...!


NOT FROM ME! BUT... OH, STEVEN! I KNOW HE'S YOUR FRIEND, BUT...!
BUT WHAT, ROBIN? TELL ME! IT'S OKAY!


HE'S CHANGED, STEVEN! EVER SINCE THE WEDDING, HE'S BEEN VERY OBVIOUS ABOUT HIS FEELINGS TOWARD ME... HOW HE WANTS TO REKINDLE OUR AFFAIR! AND I'VE TRIED TO CONVINCE HIM IT'S OVER, BUT...!
BUT...?

I **STILL** DON'T KNOW HOW IT HAPPENED! WE WERE **ALONE** IN HIS OFFICE, AND HE WAS BEING VERY **FORWARD,** AND... AND... I COULDN'T SEEM TO **HELP** MYSELF! I DON'T KNOW **WHAT** CAME OVER ME, BUT I COMPLETELY **LOST CONTROL!**

OH STEVEN! I'M SO SORRY!

THAT **SON OF A BITCH!** HE OBVIOUSLY **DOSED** ROBIN WITH THE SAME **SHIT** THAT **SIMON** USED ON HER! THE BASTARD WENT **WAY** OVER THE LINE!


IT'S ALL RIGHT, ROBIN! IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT... DAVID MUST HAVE DRUGGED YOU! HE PROBABLY USED THE SAME DRUGS THAT SIMON USED ON YOU!
JUST THE CONCLUSION I KNEW YOU'D JUMP TO, STEVEN!
MY GOD! I KNEW DAVID HAD CHANGED, BUT DIDN'T REALIZE HOW MUCH! IT'S LIKE I DON'T EVEN KNOW HIM ANYMORE!

I **KNOW** DAVID WAS UNDER A GREAT DEAL OF **STRESS** DURING THE TAKEOVER ATTEMPT, BUT **THIS**... THERE'S **NO EXCUSE** FOR SUCH **REPREHENSIBLE** BEHAVIOR! MAYBE IT'S TIME MY **OLD FRIEND** STEPPED DOWN! SUCH A BLATANT **ABUSE** OF POWER CAN'T BE **TOLERATED!**

YOU CAN'T **REALLY** IMAGINE THAT DAVID WOULD **WILLINGLY** STEP DOWN, CAN YOU? HE LIVES AND **BREATHES** DM INDUSTRIES... AND HE'S STILL THE **MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER!**

TELL ME ABOUT IT! EVEN IF I **COULD** CONVINCE **HARLEY** TO VOTE **WITH** ME, THERE'S **NO GUARANTEE** WE COULD VOTE DAVID **OUT!** AFTER THAT FAILED TAKEOVER ATTEMPT, A **30% BLOCK OF STOCK** WAS IMMEDIATELY SOLD, VERY CHEAPLY, TO ABOUT A **DOZEN** DIFFERENT INVESTORS! WHO KNOWS **HOW** THEY'D VOTE?

WELL, CAN'T **YOU** BUY IT ALL BACK?

I COULD... TO A POINT! THE REVISED COMPANY CHARTER LIMITS ANY ONE PERSON FROM OWNING MORE THAN 31% OF THE STOCK... WHICH IS EXACTLY HOW MUCH DAVID HAS! THE BEST I COULD DO IS MATCH HIS 31% WHICH STILL WOULDN'T GIVE ME ENOUGH TO OVERRIDE HIM AND HARLEY!


SINCE THE TAKEOVER ATTEMPT, DAVID'S BECOME COMPLETELY PARANOID! HE'D SEE ANY MANEUVER I'D MAKE AS A POWER PLAY... AND THEN, CONSIDERING HIS PRESENT UNSTABLE CONDITION, WHO KNOWS WHAT HE'D DO?
WELL... IS THERE ANYONE ELSE YOU KNOW... AND TRUST... WHO COULD BUY UP THAT 30% FOR YOU?




NO... BUT I KNOW SOMEONE I CAN BUY IT FOR!


SOMEONE WHOM I TRUST IMPLICITLY!


A few days later...
I TOLD YOU I'M *FINE*, STEVEN! I'VE BEEN MAKING SURE THAT *CELIA* CALLS OR STOPS BY AT LEAST A *COUPLE* OF TIMES A DAY, SO DAVID DOESN'T *DARE* TRY ANYTHING WITH ME!

DON'T **WORRY**, DARLING! I **KNOW** WHAT DAVID IS CAPABLE OF, BUT **I'M** ALSO CAPABLE OF PROTECTING **MYSELF!** I HAVEN'T SPENT **ANY** EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME WITH HIM... AND I **ALWAYS** MAKE CERTAIN THE TWO OF US ARE **NEVER ALONE!**

zn-sunny

I KNOW... AND I LOVE **YOU**, TOO! SEE YOU TONIGHT!

zn-sunny

zn-sunny


HIYA, ROBIN!
AMBER? WOW! THAT'S A NEW LOOK FOR YOU!

YOU LIKE IT? JERRY... I MEAN, **MR. SCHWARZ** HELPED ME PICK IT OUT! HE'S SO **HELPFUL!** AND SO **NICE!** I DON'T THINK I'VE **EVER** MET ANYONE AS NICE AS **HE** IS!

OH, I'M **SURE** HE IS! SO, I TAKE IT YOU **LIKE** WORKING FOR HIM!


OH YEAH!
HE'S THE BEST!
AND HE'S
SOOO...!


OOPS! PAY NO ATTENTION TO WHAT I SAID, OKAY?
IT'S FINE, AMBER! I TOTALLY UNDERSTAND! SO, WHY DID YOU STOP BY?
OH, YEAH! HE WANTED ME TO BRING THESE PACKAGES DOWN TO BE SHIPPED, AND...!

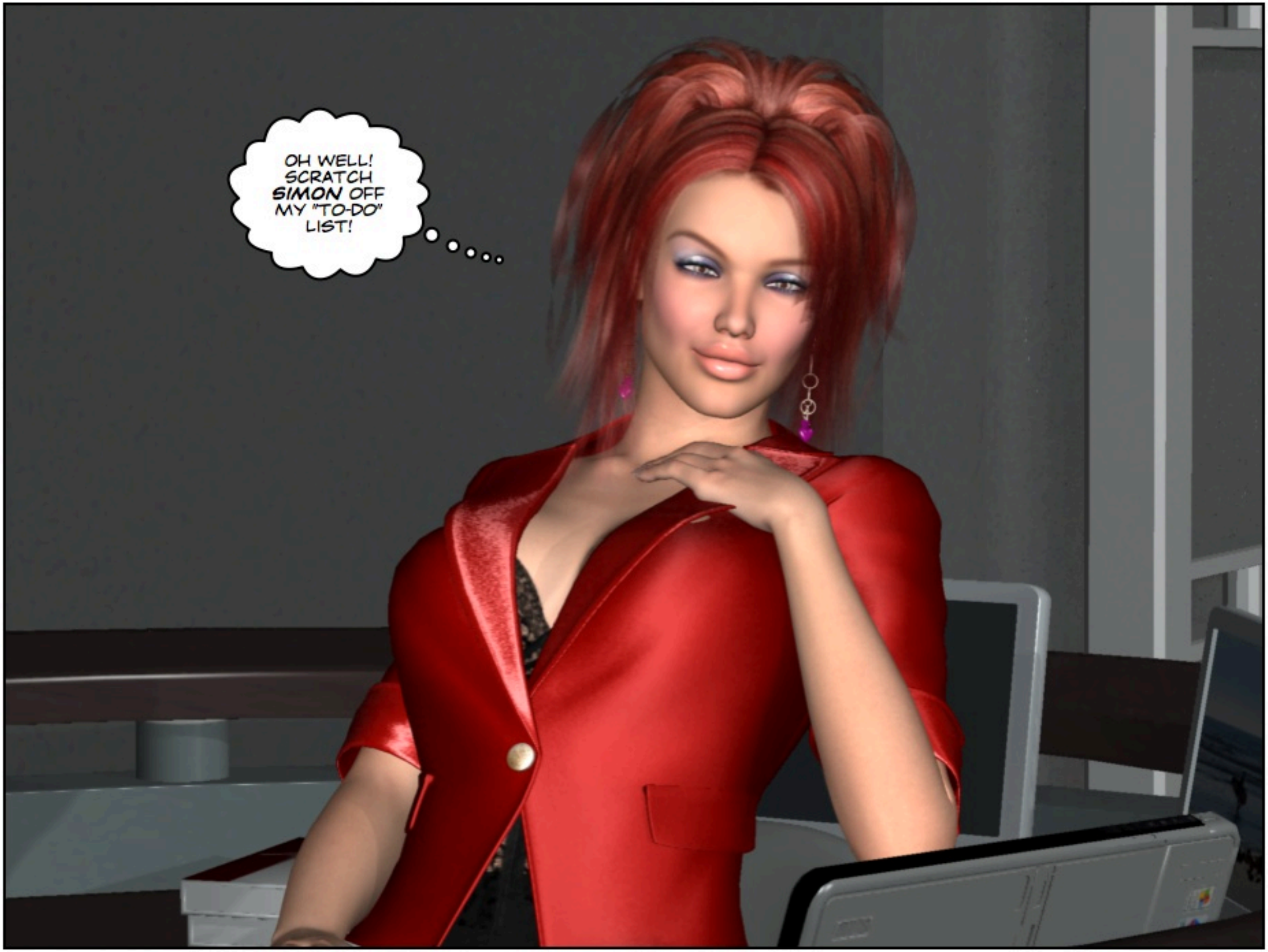
OOPS! I AM SUCH A BIMBO! I FORGOT THE PACKAGES!

THAT'S OKAY, AMBER! THE COURIER WON'T BE HERE FOR ANOTHER HOUR, SO YOU HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO GO BACK AND GET THEM!


OKAY, I'LL DO THAT! THANKS ROBIN!

SIGH! THE ONLY WAY THAT COULD BE ANY MORE ***PERFECT*** IS IF SHE ***WASN'T*** SO DAMN ***HAPPY*** ABOUT IT!

Ooooo


OH WELL! SCRATCH SIMON OFF MY "TO-DO" LIST!

A short time later...

DAMN IT, CHARLIE! YOU'RE MY **STOCKBROKER!** IT'S YOUR **JOB** TO KEEP TRACK OF THAT **STOCK!** AND NOW YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT **30% OF DM STOCK** IS SUDDENLY **UNACCOUNTED FOR?**

I'M **SORRY** DAVID, BUT THE STOCK HAS BEEN EXTREMELY **VOLATILE** SINCE THE TAKEOVER ATTEMPT! THAT SAME 30% BLOCK HAS BEEN BOUGHT, SOLD AND **RESOLD** MORE THAN A **DOZEN** TIMES IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS. I SIMPLY **HAVEN'T** BEEN ABLE TO TRACK IT!

WELL IT SOUNDS TO ME LIKE SOMEONE'S ***DELIBERATELY*** DISGUISING THEIR TRACKS BY BOUNCING IT AROUND VIA ***DUMMY CORPORATIONS***! IF SOMEONE ***ELSE*** IS NOW TRYING TO BUY UP THAT SAME STOCK, ***YOU*** NEED TO FIND OUT WHO THIS PERSON IS! ***IMMEDIATELY!***

DO I MAKE MYSELF ***CLEAR?***

I'LL DO MY ***BEST***, DAVID!


PROBLEMS?
OH, UMMM... NO! AT LEAST, I HOPE NOT!

WELL, MAYBE *THIS* WILL HELP A BIT! CREAM, BUT NO SUGAR!

THANK YOU, ROBIN! I *REALLY* NEEDED THIS!


I AIM TO PLEASE!


I'M WELL AWARE OF THAT! SPEAKING OF... WE HAVEN'T HAD MUCH OF A CHANCE TO... SEE EACH OTHER LATELY!
WELL, I THOUGHT I WAS PRETTY SPECIFIC REGARDING MY CONDITIONS, DAVID!

I KNOW... I KNOW! I JUST ***HAVEN'T*** BEEN ABLE TO SET ASIDE ENOUGH TIME! BETWEEN THE BUSINESS... AND ***CELIA***... THERE'S ALWAYS ***SOMETHING*** PREVENTING ME FROM TAKING A DOSE OF ***ADNS!***

OH, I UNDERSTAND, DAVID! ***YOU*** HAVE CERTAIN ***PRIORITIES*** THAT HAVE TO COME ***FIRST!***


I JUST HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE PRIORITIES AS WELL!
OF COURSE, BUT...!


WHOA!
THAT'S FUNNY!
IF I DIDN'T KNOW
BETTER, I'D THINK I'D
JUST SWALLOWED
SOME...!




ROBIN?! WHAT DID YOU DO?

I'M SORRY, DAVID! BUT MY *NEEDS* ARE *MY PRIORITIES!* AND RIGHT NOW, I *NEED MITCH!*

BUT ROBIN... I *REALLY* DON'T THINK...!


OH MY! THAT... LOOKS NEW!
OH IT IS! I BOUGHT IT JUST FOR YOU, MITCH! WANNA SEE THE REST OF IT?
OH, YES! PLEASE!


YOU LIKE?


LET ME
SHOW YOU
HOW MUCH...!



And, of course, at that very moment...

DAVID? HAVE YOU SEEN ROBIN? WE WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET FOR LUNCH, AND...!


DAVID...?!






CELIA!
WAIT!
PLEASE!!


OH MY GOD! I'VE GOT TO GET DRESSED AND FIND HER! TRY TO EXPLAIN...!


OOPS!
GUESS I
FORGOT ABOUT
OUR LUNCH DATE,
DIDN'T I?

A few hours later...

SIGH! THE PLACE LOOKS SO *DIFFERENT* WITH EVERYTHING BOXED UP!

International Movers
we move anywhere

International Movers

International Movers
we move anywhere

IT'S BEEN **DAYS** SINCE I SET FOOT IN HERE! I GUESS **THIS** PART OF MY LIFE IS TRULY **OVER**...

International Movers

International Movers

...OR AT LEAST IT *WILL* BE, ONCE I WRAP UP SOME *UNFINISHED BUSINESS!*


GO AWAY, ROBIN!
I HAD A FEELING I'D FIND YOU HERE, LICKING YOUR WOUNDS!

AND YOU CAME OVER TO DO **WHAT?** RUB **SALT** IN THEM? THE PERSON I GREW OLD WITH WOULD **NEVER** HAVE TREATED ME THE WAY **YOU** HAVE! BUT I TRULY HAVE **NO IDEA** WHO YOU ARE ANYMORE, **DO I?**

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I REALLY *DIDN'T* DO THIS TO *HURT* YOU, CELIA!

YOU DIDN'T *MEAN* TO *HURT* ME? *THAT'S* YOUR EXCUSE? *REALLY?*


YOU SCREWED MY HUSBAND!! YOU... YOU BITCH!!


WELL CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG, BUT AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO TURNED ME INTO A BITCH? OR DID THAT LITTLE DOUBLE-DOSING INCIDENT SLIP YOUR MIND?
YOU... YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?


YEAH... I FOUND OUT! BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I DID WHAT I DID TODAY! I WILL ADMIT, IT DID MAKE IT EASIER, BUT THIS WASN'T ABOUT GETTING BACK AT YOU!
REALLY? YOU COULD'VE FOOLED ME!

LOOK AT ME, CELIA! WHAT DO YOU SEE?

IS THIS A TRICK QUESTION?

I'M YOUNG... I'M HEALTHY... AND I'M HAPPY! I'M HELL AND GONE FROM THAT CRUSTY OLD FART YOU WERE MARRIED TO! AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF YOU!


WAS THERE SOME DECEPTION ALONG THE WAY? SURE! BUT I'M THE LAST PERSON WHO SHOULD FAULT YOU FOR BEING LESS THAN HONEST!
WELL, IF YOU DIDN'T DO IT TO GET BACK AT ME, WHY THE HELL DID YOU DO IT? AND DON'T TELL ME YOU JUST COULDN'T HELP YOURSELF!


WELL, YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT, DAVID ON ADNS IS VERY... STIMULATING, TO SAY THE LEAST!
DON'T PUSH IT, ROBIN!

I'M **SORRY,** CELIA... THAT WAS ***UNCALLED*** FOR! YOU DESERVE THE TRUTH... **ALL** OF IT! THEN I'LL LEAVE IT UP TO ***YOU*** TO DECIDE WHERE WE GO FROM HERE!

A long, difficult, and surprisingly honest explanation later...

SO... THAT'S ***EVERYTHING!*** ME, SIMON, AMBER, STEVEN... ***AND*** DAVID! ***EVERYTHING!***

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING, CELIA? ***TALK*** TO ME! SCREAM, ***SWEAR***... ***ANYTHING!***


YOU KNOW... DAVID HAD TAKEN ADNS THE FIRST TIME WE WERE TOGETHER! IT WAS IN THAT SAME OFFICE... AND ON THAT VERY SAME SOFA!
EW...!

SIGH! I GUESS BEING YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL **STILL** DOESN'T SPARE US **HEARTACHE!** IT SEEMS WE'RE **ALL** GUILTY OF DECEPTION IN **ONE FORM** OR **ANOTHER!**

SOME OF US **MORE** THAN OTHERS...!

I DON'T KNOW IF IT MAKES ANY **DIFFERENCE** TO YOU OR NOT, BUT I'M **QUITTING** MY JOB AT DM! SINCE STEVEN AND I ARE GETTING **MARRIED** THIS WEEKEND, I REALLY **WON'T** NEED TO WORK ANYMORE!

WAIT A MINUTE! YOU'RE **STILL** GOING TO MARRY HIM? EVEN THOUGH **HE'S** THE ONE WHO'S BEEN TRYING TO TAKE OVER **DM,** AND THAT HE WANTED TO USE **YOU** TO **SEDUCE DAVID** IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOALS?

WHAT CAN I SAY? I THINK STEVEN GETS UNDER MY SKIN BECAUSE HE'S THE ***SAME*** AS ***ME***! SNEAKY... ***UNDERHANDED***... ALWAYS LOOKING FOR A ***SHORTCUT*** TO GET WHAT HE WANTS! BUT ***HE'S*** BETTER AT IT THAN I ***EVER*** WAS! WHEN I LOOK AT HIM, I SEE THE PERSON I ALWAYS IMAGINED BOB ***COULD'VE*** BEEN... STRONG, SUCCESSFUL, ***RESPECTED!***

NEITHER ONE OF US WOULD QUALIFY AS ***ANGELS***, BUT IN ***SOME*** WAYS, I THINK WE MAY BE ***SOULMATES!***

CAN YOU BELIEVE *I'D* EVER BE SPOUTING SUCH *MUSH?* BUT THE THING IS... I *REALLY* THINK I MIGHT *LOVE* HIM!

WEIRD, HUH?

NOT AT ALL, HONEY! I THINK IT *ACTUALLY* MAKES A LOT OF *SENSE!*


SO... WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT DAVID?
SIGH! FORGIVE HIM, I GUESS! THE TRUTH IS, NONE OF US HAVE BEHAVED LIKE ANGELS IN RECENT DAYS!
BUT FROM NOW ON, I'M GOING TO WATCH HIM LIKE A HAWK!


AND THAT WILL BE A WHOLE LOT EASIER WITHOUT YOU SASHAYING THAT SAUCY ASS OF YOURS IN HIS FACE EVERY DAY!
DOES THIS MEAN I'M FORGIVEN TOO?

HONEY, **WE'VE** BEEN TOGETHER FOR **OVER THIRTY YEARS!** WE'RE NOT GOING TO LET THE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR **MEN** GET IN THE WAY OF **THAT!**

YOU KNOW, **NEVER** IN A **MILLION YEARS** WOULD I HAVE THOUGHT I'D HEAR YOU SAY **ANYTHING** LIKE **THAT** TO ME...

AND MAKE ME SO DAMN **HAPPY** TO HEAR IT!


AND BEFORE YOU RUN OFF AND FORGIVE DAVID, LET ME RUN SOMETHING PAST YOU THAT COULD VERY DEFINITELY HELP KEEP HIM IN LINE!

That weekend, in a well-known desert oasis...


HERE WE ARE, MRS. CHAMBERS! I HOPE THAT QUICKIE CEREMONY WASN'T TOO CHEESY FOR YOU!


AS LONG AS THERE'S NOTHING "QUICK" ABOUT THE HONEYMOON, I'M ECSTATIC!

BESIDES, HOW MANY GIRLS CAN SAY THEY WERE MARRIED BY ***ELVIS*** AFTER BEING GIVEN AWAY BY THE ENTIRE ***RAT PACK!*** IT WAS ***PERFECT,*** LOVE!


NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I THINK I NEED TO GO FRESHEN UP!
BY ALL MEANS!

A few minutes later...

DAMN IT! WHERE THE **HELL** IS **AMBER?** I GOT A DESPERATE-SOUNDING EMAIL FROM DAVID, **CONFESSING** THAT CELIA HAD CAUGHT HIM **RED-HANDED** WITH ANOTHER WOMAN! I WANTED TO **CONGRATULATE** HER FOR FINALLY DECIDING TO **SPREAD HER LEGS** TO ADVANCE OUR AGENDA!

I **KNEW** THAT MY **"TOUGH LOVE"** TREATMENT WOULD GET THROUGH TO HER, THAT SHE'D SOON REALIZE HOW **MISERABLE** HER LIFE WOULD BE IF SHE **DIDN'T** SEDUCE DAVID!


I HOPE THAT'S NOT BUSINESS!
OH, WOW!
UMM... NO! I WAS JUST TRYING TO CALL MY NIECE! TELL HER THE GOOD NEWS!


GOOD LUCK WITH THAT! SHE'S PROBABLY TOO BUSY BANGING HER NEW BOSS!
WHAT?! AMBER? I... I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'D...!


OH, COME OFF IT, STEVEN! SHE'S AS MUCH YOUR NIECE AS I AM AN EX-CAMPFIRE GIRL!
WHAT ARE YOU IMPLYING, ROBIN?


OH STEVEN... LOVE... PUMPKIN... HUBBY! I KNOW ALL ABOUT AMBER-SLASH-SIMON AND HOW YOU TWO HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER FROM THE GET-GO TO TAKE OVER DM! IN FACT I'VE KNOWN FOR QUITE SOME TIME!
YOU... YOU KNEW WHAT I'VE BEEN UP TO? ALL THIS TIME? AND YOU STILL WANTED TO MARRY ME?


OF COURSE, SILLY! AFTER ALL, YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT ME... THE AWFUL THINGS I'VE DONE... EVEN WHO I USED TO BE... YET YOU STILL WANTED TO MARRY ME! WHY?
GOOD LORD! DO I HAVE ANY SECRETS LEFT YOU HAVEN'T UNCOVERED?


THE TRUTH IS, DESPITE THE FACT THAT YOU USED TO BE A MAN, YOU'RE MORE WOMAN THAN ANYONE I'VE EVER KNOWN! THE MOMENT I LAID EYES ON YOU, IT WAS A DONE DEAL! HOW COULD I NOT MARRY YOU?
MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY, LOVE! WE BELONG TOGETHER! NOW, WHY DON'T WE...

HANG ON A SEC! I'M **CONFUSED** ABOUT SOMETHING! YOUR COMMENT ABOUT **AMBER! WHERE IS SHE?**

SIGH! DO WE **REALLY** HAVE TO TALK ABOUT THIS **RIGHT NOW?**

INDULGE ME, LOVE! **PLEASE!**

FINE! I JUST SAW TO IT THAT "AMBER" GOT A TASTE OF THE SAME "MEDICINE" SIMON GAVE ME! FOR THE LAST WEEK SHE'S BEEN HAPPILY BANGING HER NEW MIDDLE MANAGEMENT BOSS AS HIS NEW BIMBO-IN-TRAINING!

REALLY? YOU DID THAT? GOOD GIRL! SAVES ME THE TROUBLE OF DEALING WITH THAT IDIOT!

I'M GLAD YOU APPROVE! **NOW...!**

WAIT A MINUTE! IF AMBER IS **BANGING HER BOSS,** THEN WHO THE HELL DID CELIA CATCH **DAVID** WITH?

TAKE A **WILD GUESS,** LOVE!


YOU DID THAT FOR ME, DIDN'T YOU? SEDUCED DAVID... FOR ME?
OF COURSE! YOU'RE MY HUSBAND! I DID WHAT WAS NECESSARY TO FULFILL YOUR NEEDS... AND MINE!
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T HEARD, DAVID MITCHELL IS NO LONGER THE MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER AT DM INDUSTRIES!


YOU KNOW, A LESSER MAN MIGHT NOT APPRECIATE WHAT YOU DID, BUT I FIND IT EXTREMELY... AROUSING! I APPRECIATE THE DEPTHS YOU'RE WILLING TO GO FOR ME!
MMMMM... AROUSING IS GOOD!

AND ONCE I GET **CELIA** TO SELL **ME** HER STOCK, **I'LL** BE THE MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER AND **DM** WILL **FINALLY** BE **MINE!**

UMMM... THAT'S NOT ***EXACTLY*** HOW IT PLAYS OUT, HONEY! YOU SEE, CELIA ***DID*** GET OVER HALF OF DAVID'S STOCK, BUT SHE HAS ***NO INTENTION*** OF SELLING IT!


WHAT?!
RELAX, HONEY! JUST, OOOOOOO.... JUST STAY PUT WHILE I DO A LITTLE MULTI-TASKING! AHHH.. THERE WE GO!
NOW, WHERE WAS I? OH, YES...

IT SEEMS **HARLEY** GAVE **ALL** HIS STOCK TO **STACY** AS A WEDDING PRESENT, SO WITH **HER** STOCK, **CELIA'S STOCK** AND THE STOCK **YOU** PUT IN **MY NAME**, THE **THREE OF US** HAVE DECIDED TO FORM A SORT OF **CONSORTIUM!**

WE BELIEVE **DM INDUSTRIES** WILL BE A **MUCH** MORE SUCCESSFUL COMPANY **WITHOUT** ALL THE **CHEST-THUMPING** AND **DICK-SWINGING** THAT'S BEEN GOING ON LATELY!


LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT! YOU THREE WOMEN NOT ONLY HAVE TAKEN CONTROL OF DM AWAY FROM MITCHELL, BUT IN DOING SO YOU'VE ALSO COMPLETELY OUTMANEUVERED ME! IS THAT RIGHT?
'FRAID SO, HONEY!


HOPE YOU'RE NOT TOO PISSED! I'D HATE TO LET A LITTLE THING LIKE BUSINESS UPSET OUR HONEYMOON!
PISSED?! MY GOD, WOMAN! I'M TOO DAMN IMPRESSED TO BE PISSED! YOU REALLY PULLED ONE OVER ON ME!

I'M **GLAD** YOU'RE NOT UPSET! AND IF IT MAKES **ANY** DIFFERENCE, YOU **ARE** MARRIED TO THE **NEW MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER** AND I THINK YOU'LL FIND THAT **I** CAN BE **EASILY** INFLUENCED... WITH THE RIGHT KIND OF **INDUCEMENTS!**


THAT'S WHY I MARRIED YOU, BABY! YOU'RE A WOMAN AFTER MY OWN HEART!
MMMM... IT'S NOT JUST YOUR HEART I'M AFTER, LOVE!


AND NOW, IF WE'RE FINALLY DONE TALKING BUSINESS, I'LL SHOW YOU JUST WHAT I MEAN!


A few months later, back at Club Paradox...

Another girls' night out...


WHEW! THEY ARE DEFINITELY THE HOTTEST OF THE HOT IN THIS PLACE, THAT'S FOR DAMN SURE! I'M SURPRISED THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY BEEN HIT ON BY EVERY PUNK HERE!
MAKES YOU WONDER HOW WE WERE SO DAMN LUCKY TO END UP WITH THEM!


LUCK? HELL! SOME OF US JUST USED GOOD OLD FASHIONED CHARM, INSTEAD OF RELYING ON CHEMICALLY INDUCED "ENHANCEMENTS" TO HOOK A WOMAN!
ARE YOU IMPLYING SOMETHING, STEVEN?
WHATEVER WOULD MAKE YOU SAY THAT,... MITCH?

YOU ARE THE LAST PERSON TO LECTURE ME ON ETHICS, OLD FRIEND! JUST HOW LONG WERE YOU PLOTTING TO TAKE OVER MY COMPANY, HMM? MONTHS? YEARS?


THIS FROM THE GUY WHO TRIED TO SEDUCE MY FIANCÉE LESS THAN A WEEK AFTER HIS OWN FREAKING WEDDING!
I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS YOUR FIANCÉE AT THE TIME!

GIRLS... GIRLS! YOU'RE BOTH PRETTY! NOW WILL YOU PLEASE KNOCK IT OFF!

THE ONLY REASON I CAME ALONG TONIGHT WAS TO KEEP YOU TWO FROM DOING EXACTLY THIS! GETTING IN A BITCH-SLAP FIGHT WITH ONE ANOTHER!

ALTHOUGH I HAVE TO ***CONFESS*** THAT THIS ***ADNS*** STUFF OF YOURS IS ***AMAZING!*** I WOULDN'T MIND GETTING MY HANDS ON A ***CASE*** OR TWO OF THIS STUFF! SURPRISE ***STACY*** WITH IT, YOU KNOW!

YEAH, GOOD LUCK WITH ***THAT!*** WHAT WE USED TONIGHT WAS THE ***LAST*** I HAD ONHAND! THE ***"NEW OWNERS"*** ARE MAKING DAMN SURE THAT EVERY DROP OF ***EVERYTHING*** WE PRODUCE IS ***ACCOUNTED*** FOR AND USED PURELY FOR ***RESEARCH*** UNTIL APPROVED FOR RELEASE... ***SOMEDAY,*** HOPEFULLY!


JUST AS WELL! THE ONLY REASON I TOOK THE STUFF WAS BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE LESS CONSPICUOUS WHILE SATISFYING MY CURIOSITY ABOUT THESE "GIRLS' NIGHTS OUT" THEY'RE SO DAMN PROTECTIVE OF!


ACTUALLY, ITS KIND OF A KICK WATCHING ROBIN STRUT HER STUFF LIKE THIS... KNOWING FULL WELL SHE'S COMING HOME WITH ME, AND ME ALONE!
EAT YOUR HEARTS OUT, YOU YOUNG AND HORNY WANNABES!


WELL, IF THIS IS THE LAST OF THIS STUFF WE'LL SEE FOR A WHILE, I SAY WE MAKE THE BEST OF IT! SHALL WE, GENTLEMEN?

SO, IS MAEVE **EVER** COMING IN OFF THE DANCE FLOOR? SHE'S BEEN OUT THERE SINCE WE GOT HERE!

SHE SAYS SHE DOESN'T WANT TO BE SEEN HANGING WITH A BUNCH OF **"OLD MARRIED LADIES"**, AS **SHE** PUT IT! IT MESSES UP HER **"MOJO!"**

REALLY? WELL IF SHE'S NOT **CAREFUL,** I'LL HAVE DAVID **PROMOTE** HER AGAIN! **THAT'LL** SHOW HER!


HE'D DO THAT FOR YOU?
OH YES! HE'S BECOME VERY RECEPTIVE TO MY WANTS AND NEEDS SINCE HE REALIZED WE CAN FIRE HIM AT THE DROP OF A HAT!

SPEAKING OF **DAVID**, DID HE **REALLY** THINK A BAD **DYE JOB** WOULD KEEP US FROM **RECOGNIZING** HIM AND THE OTHER GUYS OVER THERE?

WELL, AT LEAST THEY'RE ALL DOING SOMETHING **TOGETHER** FOR A CHANGE! IT'S A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!


SO STACY, HOW'S THE NEW ADDITION ON THE HOUSE COMING?
THEY'RE BREAKING GROUND NEXT WEEK AND ESTIMATING COMPLETION IN A COUPLE OF MONTHS, DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER! BUT I'LL STILL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO PICK OUT FURNITURE, DECORATE AND PICK OUT A COLOR PATTERN... PINK... OR BLUE!


HOW'S HARLEY FEEL ABOUT BEING A DADDY AT HIS AGE? DOES IT FREAK HIM OUT?
HE COULDN'T BE MORE THRILLED! I'M AFRAID HE'S GOING TO SPOIL THIS CHILD ROTTEN!

REALLY?

OH **YEAH!** HE JOKES ABOUT BEING BOTH THE **PROUD FATHER AND** THE DOTING GRANDPA... ALL **ROLLED INTO ONE!**

IT'S FUNNY... THE ***FIRST*** TIME WE WERE MARRIED, WE TRIED LIKE ***RABBITS*** TO GET PREGNANT, BUT ***COULDN'T!*** THE DOCTORS FINALLY TOLD US THAT IT ***WASN'T POSSIBLE*** FOR ME!

IF THOSE OLD ***QUACKS*** WERE STILL ALIVE, I'D SEND THEM EACH A COPY OF MY ***SONOGRAMS!***

YOU KNOW, IT **MAY** NOT BE THAT THOSE DOCTORS WERE **WRONG!**

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I HAD A FULL **CHECKUP** THE OTHER DAY AND THE DOCTOR TOLD ME I WAS IN **PERFECT** HEALTH! **EVERYTHING** WORKS JUST **FINE!**

WELL, THAT'S **GREAT!**

WAIT A MINUTE... EVERYTHING? BUT... THAT MISCARRIAGE! AND THE...!

AND THE RESULTING HYSTERECTOMY? NO SIGN OF IT! EVERYTHING'S BACK THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE!


SO YOU THINK THE F-RHO-DT DID MORE THAN JUST MAKE US YOUNG! IT... RESTORED US?
IT'S POSSIBLE! AND IF THAT'S THE CASE, THIS MAY BE A NEW DIRECTION TO TAKE RESEARCH AT DM! WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I THINK IT'S A ***FABULOUS*** IDEA! SWITCH FOCUS FROM YOUTH AND BEAUTY TO ***HEALTH! I LOVE IT!*** WHAT DO ***YOU*** THINK, ROBIN?

OH, UMMM... ***YEAH!*** IT SOUNDS ***GREAT!*** LET'S DO IT!


WELL, I THINK I'LL DRAG DAVID ONTO THE DANCE FLOOR FOR AWHILE, GET HIM HAPPY AND HORNY, AND THEN SPRING OUR LATEST PROPOSITION ON HIM ONCE WE'VE CONCLUDED THE EVENING'S ACTIVITIES AT HOME! HE ALWAYS SEEMS TO BE EXTREMELY RECEPTIVE TO OUR BUSINESS IDEAS WHEN HE'S IN A POST-COITAL STATE!
LATER, GIRLS!
BYE CELIA!

I THINK ***I'LL*** BE HEADING OUT TOO! I'VE NEVER SEEN HARLEY ON ***ADNS*** BEFORE, AND I HAVE TO SAY, HE LOOKS ***AWFULLY GOOD!*** BESIDES, I NEED TO GET HIM AWAY FROM THAT ***TRAMP*** WHO'S MANAGED TO DRAPE HERSELF ***ALL OVER HIM!***

UMM, STACY! BEFORE YOU GO, CAN I ***ASK*** YOU SOMETHING?

OF ***COURSE,*** HONEY! WHAT IS IT?

DO YOU **REALLY** THINK HARLEY IS **HAPPY** ABOUT THE BABY, OR **COULD** HE BE PUTTING UP A **FRONT** FOR **YOUR BENEFIT?**

I MEAN... **HOW** DO YOU KNOW FOR **SURE?**


OH HONEY, BELIEVE ME! WHEN YOU TELL A MAN HE'S GOING TO BE A FATHER, THE LOOK ON HIS FACE TELLS YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW! AND... I KNOW!
WHY DO YOU ASK?


OH... JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU WERE BOTH HAPPY... THAT'S ALL!
OH WE ARE... MOST DEFINITELY!


HAVE A GOOD EVENING... STEVEN!


HEY THERE, HANDSOME! COME HERE OFTEN?
HMPH! GUESS WE WEREN'T AS "INCONSPICUOUS" AS WE THOUGHT!

NOT HARDLY! BUT WE *DID* HAVE FUN WATCHING YOU THREE BE *"STEALTHY"*! SO, WHAT *NOW?* GONNA TRY AND *PICK ME UP* WITH SOME *SMOOTH* AND *SUAVE LINE?*

SURE! HOW ABOUT... CAN I BUY YOU A DRINK, *HOT STUFF?*

HMMM... MAYBE A *CLUB SODA!* BUT I WANT TO *TALK* FOR A MINUTE FIRST!

ANYTHING YOU WANT, *BABY!*


HMMM... FUNNY YOU SHOULD PUT IT THAT WAY!







The end is nothing but an opportunity...

...for a new beginning.