

The Arrangement

Meet **Daniel Kim.** A young man who is currently having the worst day of his life.

BUT ***I*** DIDN'T ***DO*** IT, FATHER! THOSE ***OTHER*** STUDENTS JUST ***SAID*** I CHEATED TO GET THEMSELVES ***OFF*** THE HOOK!

BUT ***FATHER***..

FROM WHAT THE ***DEAN*** TELLS ME, IT WASN'T ***JUST*** CHEATING... IT WAS ***SELLING STOLEN*** FINAL EXAMS!

AND ***NOT*** JUST TO ***ONE*** OR ***TWO*** STUDENTS, BUT TO ***ENTIRE*** FRATERNITIES, SORORITIES ***AND*** DORMITORIES!

YOU TOOK ***THOUSANDS*** OF DOLLARS FROM THOSE STUDENTS... FOR WHAT TURNED OUT TO BE ***FAKE TESTS!***

IF I HADN'T ***PAID BACK*** THAT MONEY AND OFFERED TO IMMEDIATELY ***WITHDRAW*** YOU FROM SCHOOL, THEY WOULD'VE CHARGED ***YOU*** WITH A ***FELONY!***

THE ***DISHONOR*** YOU'VE BROUGHT UPON THIS FAMILY IS ***UNFATHOMABLE!***

IT'S ***ALL*** A ***LIE,*** FATHER! I...

I WILL COME AROUND, FATHER! I WILL! YOU'LL SEE! I...

YOU... YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT!

BUT FATHER... !!!

ENOUGH! I'VE LOOKED THE OTHER WAY FOR FAR TOO LONG, HOPING UPON HOPE THAT YOU WOULD COME AROUND AND SEE HOW YOU'VE BEEN WASTING ALL THE OPPORTUNITIES WE'VE GIVEN YOU!

WHETHER YOU DO OR NOT IS NO LONGER ANY CONCERN OF MINE! BECAUSE FROM THIS POINT ON, I NO LONGER HAVE A SON!

I DO!

THE LAST THING I HAVE TO GIVE YOU IS MY WELL WISHES! GOOD BYE, DANIEL!


SHIT!!! SHIT, SHIT, SHIT,SHIT!!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT CHEAP, HYPOCRITICAL, SON OF A BITCH IS CUTTING ME OFF!
ACTING ALL PIOUS AND HONORABLE WHEN HE'S MADE MILLIONS CONTRACTING WITH BIG PHARMA!


WELL, FUCK HIM! I DON'T NEED HIS MONEY ANYWAY.
I'VE GOT PLENTY OF MY OWN SAVED UP FROM MY LITTLE BUSINESS VENTURES HERE ON CAMPUS! HEH-HEH!


WHAT THE FUCK?!
WHERE'S MY GODDAMN
MONEY?!

THAT **MOTHER FUCKER!** HE EMPTIED **MY** ACCOUNT TO REIMBURSE THOSE **SAPS** I SCAMMED!

AND **HE** WONDERS **WHERE** I GET **MY** SENSE OF "**HONOR**" FROM!

Knock, knock!!

DANIEL KIM? THIS IS **CAMPUS SECURITY!**

WE'RE **HERE** TO ESCORT YOU **OFF** THE **CAMPUS!**

I AM SO FUCKING SCREWED!

MR. KIM...!

Knock, knock!!

Six months later...

Now meet **Rex Dawes.** Rising young star in the legal firm of Burns, Harris and Associates.

G'MORNING, REX!

GOOD MORNING, MR. BURNS! HOW ARE ***YOU*** TODAY?

FINE, REX! JUST FINE!

Burns, Harris
and associates

AND, LIKE **CLOCKWORK**, HE STOPS AND COMPLIMENTS **ALICE** ON **WHATEVER** OUTFIT SHE'S WEARING TODAY! *CHUCKLE!*

GOOD MORNING, REX!

I'M NOT HERE TO SEE ***HIM***, REX! I'M HERE TO SEE ***YOU!***

AND WILL YOU ***PLEASE*** START CALLING ME ***GLORIA***! YOU'VE BEEN WITH THE FIRM ***LONG ENOUGH*** TO PUT US ON A ***FIRST-NAME BASIS!***

MRS. BURNS! UMMM... GOOD MORNING YOURSELF! I ***JUST*** PASSED YOUR ***HUSBAND*** IN THE HALLWAY!

OF ***COURSE***! SO, UHHH... WHAT CAN I ***DO*** FOR YOU... ***GLORIA?***

IT'S COME TO MY ATTENTION THAT YOU'RE THE ***ONLY*** JUNIOR PARTNER WHO ***HASN'T*** BEEN TO ***ANY*** OF THE COMPANY GET-TOGETHERS MY HUSBAND AND I THROW!

THEY'VE BECOME KIND OF A COMPANY ***TRADITION*** FOR ALL THE PARTNERS, JUNIOR PARTNERS ***AND*** THEIR SPOUSES TO ***MINGLE*** AND GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER ***OUTSIDE*** OF BUSINESS!

I WAS ***HOPING*** THAT A MORE ***PERSONAL*** INVITATION FROM ***ME*** JUST ***MIGHT*** PERSUADE YOU TO COME THIS TIME! IT'S TWO WEEKS FROM TOMORROW!

AND BY ALL MEANS, THE INVITATION INCLUDES YOUR WIFE... ***OR*** GIRLFRIEND... OR ***WHATEVER***!

I ***APPRECIATE*** THE OFFER, GLORIA! BUT SINCE I'M ***NOT*** MARRIED AND HAVEN'T REALLY HAD THE ***CHANCE*** TO DATE SINCE I MOVED HERE A FEW MONTHS AGO, I'D FEEL A LITTLE ***OUT OF PLACE*** COMING BY ***MYSELF***!

I'VE ALSO ***JUST*** BOUGHT MYSELF A ***NEW HOUSE,*** SO I'M GOING TO BE RATHER ***BUSY*** THESE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKENDS GETTING MOVED IN AND SETTLED!

I ***HOPE*** YOU UNDERSTAND!

OF **COURSE** I DO, REX! I COMPLETELY **FORGOT** THAT YOU WERE THE **ONLY** UNMARRIED JUNIOR PARTNER IN THE FIRM! PLEASE **FORGIVE** ME IF I SEEMED **INSENSITIVE**!

IT'S JUST THAT MY HUSBAND AND I HAVE **ALWAYS** THOUGHT OF YOU ALL AS **MORE** THAN JUST **EMPLOYEES**! GETTING TO KNOW ALL YOU YOUNG, **ENERGETIC** PEOPLE HAS BROUGHT GREAT **JOY** TO ME... TO **US**!

BUT I TOTALLY **RESPECT** YOUR DECISION TO PASS ON OUR INVITATION!

THANK YOU, GLORIA! I **APPRECIATE** THAT!

I'D JUST ***HATE*** FOR ANYONE TO GET THE ***IMPRESSION*** YOU WEREN'T ***HAPPY*** HERE!

I **HOPE** TO SEE YOU AGAIN **VERY SOON**, REX!

CRAP! UP TO NOW, I'VE BEEN WRITING OFF MRS. BURNS' "PLAYFULNESS" AS HARMLESS SEXUAL BANTER!

BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SHE'S SLIPPED A BARELYVEILED THREAT INTO THE SITUATION!

WHAT THE HELL AM I GONNA DO?


Later that night, across town...

Daniel has his own set of problems...

TEN BUCKS! THAT'S *ALL* THAT *CHEAP* SON OF A BITCH GAVE ME FOR THAT CELL PHONE I SWIPED OUT OF THAT CAR!

FUCK! IF SOMEONE'S GONNA BE *STUPID* ENOUGH TO LEAVE THEIR CAR UNLOCKED IN *THIS* NEIGHBORHOOD, THEY SHOULD *ALSO* BE STUPID ENOUGH TO AT *LEAST* LEAVE THEIR *WALLETS* IN THE CAR TOO!

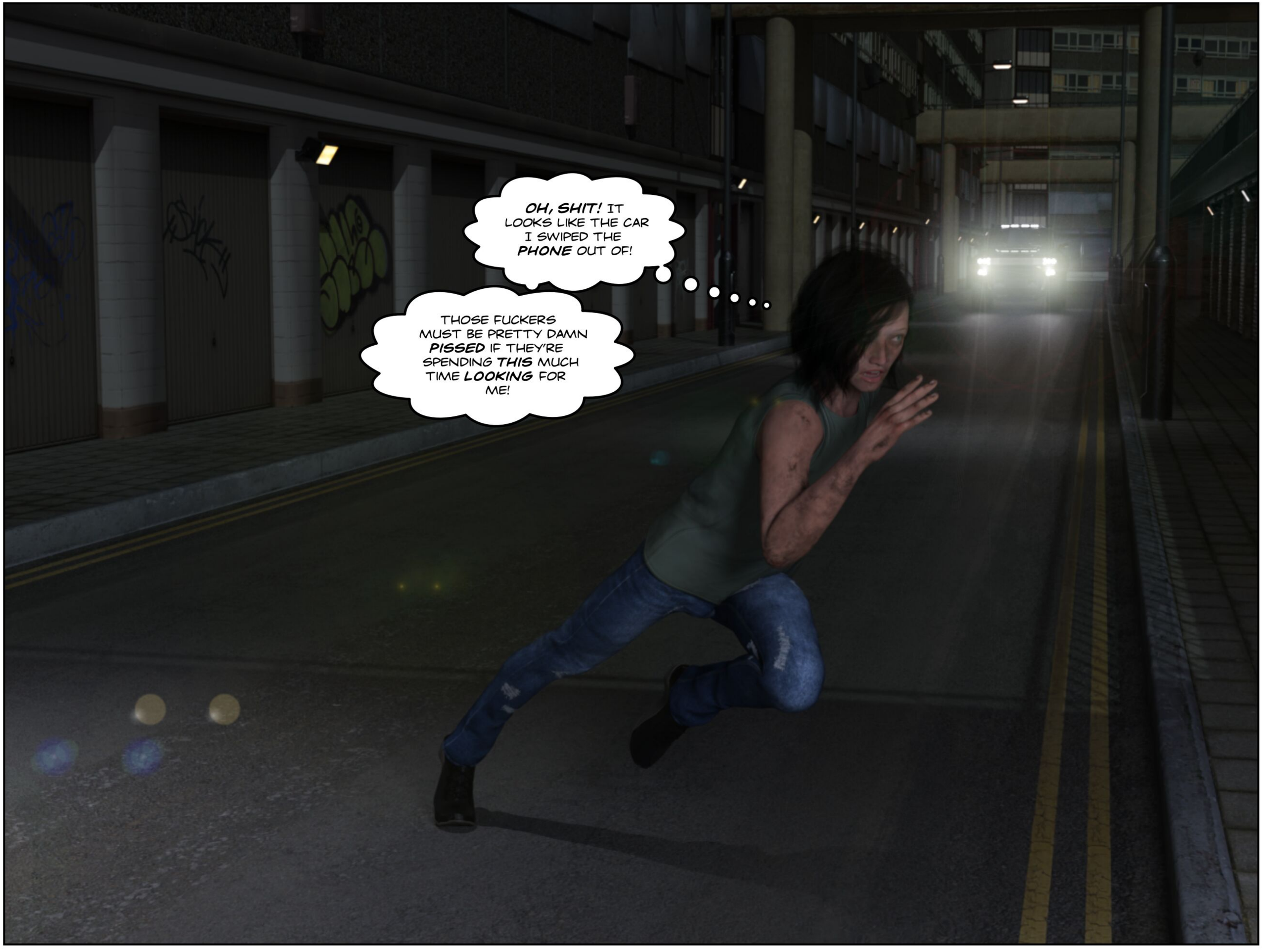
OH WELL! TEN BUCKS IS TEN BUCKS! AND *THIS* TIME I DIDN'T HAVE TO *BLOW* ANYONE TO GET IT!

IF I WAS ***SMART***, I'D USE THIS AS ***SEED MONEY*** TO EVENTUALLY GET A BUS TICKET ***OUT*** OF HERE!

BUT WHAT ***GOOD*** WOULD ***THAT*** DO ME? I'D JUST BE TOTALLY ***BROKE*** AGAIN BUT SOMEWHERE ***ELSE!***

AT LEAST STICKING AROUND HERE I ***KNOW*** THE ***TERRITORY***... WHERE TO ***SLEEP***, WHERE TO FIND ***FOOD***, AND THE ***EASIEST*** PLACES TO ***STEAL SHIT*** FROM!

HUH? WHAT'S A CAR DOING DOWN HERE ***THIS*** TIME OF NIGHT?


OH, SHIT! IT LOOKS LIKE THE CAR I SWIPED THE PHONE OUT OF!
THOSE FUCKERS MUST BE PRETTY DAMN PISSED IF THEY'RE SPENDING THIS MUCH TIME LOOKING FOR ME!

WHERE YA GOIN', KID?! JUST GIVE US THE **PHONE** BACK AND NO ONE GETS HURT! **PROMISE!**

OH, FUCK! THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE **SIKORSKY BROTHERS!** THEY'RE THE BIGGEST **DRUG** AND **GUN** RUNNERS IN **THIS** PART OF THE CITY!

THAT PHONE **PROBABLY** HAD SOME REALLY IMPORTANT AND SENSITIVE **SHIT** ON IT!

WHICH MEANS **I'M** FUCKIN' **TOAST** IF **THEY** GET THEIR HANDS ON ME!


LOOKS LIKE STICKING AROUND HERE ISN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA ANYMORE!

A couple of days later, in a much nicer part of town...

WHEW! EVEN AFTER SPENDING ALL OF LAST WEEKEND UNPACKING BOXES, I'VE ONLY PUT A DENT IN THEM!

IT'LL PROBABLY TAKE ME A GOOD MONTH OF WEEKENDS TO GET IT ALL PUT AWAY SOMEWHERE!

BUT IT'S WORTH IT! I LOVE THIS HOUSE!

IT'S GOT MORE ROOM THAN I'LL ***EVER*** NEED, BUT THAT'S ***OKAY***!

I ***LIKE*** THE IDEA OF HAVING A ***GUEST ROOM***... OR TWO, AND ROOM FOR A ***HOME OFFICE***!

THIS PLACE HAS ***SO MANY*** POSSIBILITIES, I HARDLY KNOW ***WHERE*** TO START!

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ONE THING I'D ***LOVE*** TO DO SOMEDAY IS PUT A SMALL ***POOL*** IN THIS BACKYARD!

THERE'S ***PLENTY*** OF ROOM AND THERE'S ALREADY A ***PRIVACY WALL*** AROUND THE WHOLE YARD, SO ***WHY NOT?***

BESIDES, I'VE NEVER HAD TO ***DEAL*** WITH A ***LAWN*** BEFORE, SO MIGHT AS WELL ***DIG UP*** THE GRASS AND THOSE TWO BUSHES BEFORE THEY ***DIE*** FROM ***LOW MAINTENANCE*** ANYWAY! HEH-HEH!

WAIT A MINUTE! WHAT'S THAT BEHIND THE BUSHES?

IS THAT A PERSON BACK THERE?!


HEY, YOU! BACK THERE BEHIND THE BUSHES! ARE YOU OKAY?
HUH?

I SAID, ARE YOU **OKAY?**

OH SHIT! IT'S ***ALREADY*** MORNING! I WAS HOPING TO BE ***LONG GONE*** BEFORE ANYONE ***SAW*** ME BACK HERE!

AT LEAST ***THIS*** GUY'S NOT ***SCREAMING*** AT ME OR THREATENING TO CALL THE ***COPS***... AT LEAST ***NOT YET!***

LET'S SEE IF I CAN ***KEEP*** IT THAT WAY!

I... I'M ***SO SORRY!*** SOME ***MEN*** WERE ***CHASING*** ME AND I NEEDED A PLACE TO ***HIDE!***

I GUESS I FELL ASLEEP!

PLEASE DON'T CALL THE POLICE! I... I'LL LEAVE RIGHT AWAY!

WHOA! SLOW DOWN THERE, BUDDY! I'M NOT CALLING ANYONE!

YOU SEEM TO BE IN PRETTY ROUGH SHAPE! WHY DON'T YOU COME INSIDE AND I CAN GET YOU SOMETHING TO EAT!


SOMETHING TO EAT?
YEAH! WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU ATE?
UMM... A COUPLE OF DAYS!
THAT SETTLES IT! COME INSIDE AND I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN FIND FOR YOU!
OKAY, I'VE DEALT WITH GUYS LIKE THIS BEFORE! ALL SWEET TALK WITH PROMISES OF FOOD TO KNOCK ME OFF MY GUARD!
NEXT THING I KNOW, I'M ON MY KNEES GIVING HIM A BLOWJOB!
WELL... I'VE DONE WORSE FOR A MEAL...

SORRY ABOUT THE ***MESS***! I ***JUST*** MOVED IN AND MOST THINGS ARE ***STILL*** IN BOXES!

BUT I THINK I'VE UNPACKED ENOUGH ***KITCHEN GEAR*** TO WHIP UP SOME ***BACON*** AND ***EGGS***! THAT SOUND OKAY?

THAT WOULD BE ***AWESOME***!

WOW! SWEET DIGS! EVEN ***NICER*** THAN THE PLACE THE OLD MAN SET UP HIS SECOND ***EX-WIFE*** IN AFTER THEY SPLIT!

OR WAS IT HIS ***THIRD?***

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THIS'LL JUST TAKE ME A FEW MINUTES! HAVE A SEAT!

OKAY, TIME TO ***FEEL*** THIS GUY ***OUT*** AND SEE WHAT I CAN ***EXPECT*** FROM HIM!

I HAVE TO ASK...***WHY*** ARE YOU BEING SO ***NICE*** TO ME? I MEAN, ***MOST*** PEOPLE WOULD'VE JUST CALLED THE ***COPS*** ON ME BY NOW! BUT INSTEAD, ***YOU'RE*** ACTUALLY ***NVITING ME IN*** AND ***FEEDING*** ME!

BELIEVE ME, I'M ***VERY GRATEFUL***, BUT... IT'S ***UNUSUAL!***

FAIR QUESTION!

DURING COLLEGE AND LAW SCHOOL, I SPENT A LOT OF TIME ***VOLUNTEERING*** IN THE LOCAL ***COMMUNITY SHELTERS!***

IT GAVE ***ME*** A LOT OF ***PERSPECTIVE*** THAT ***MOST*** PEOPLE WILL ***NEVER*** HAVE!

AT THE TIME, I ***PROMISED*** MYSELF I WOULD ***KEEP WORKING*** WITH DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE ***AFTER*** I GRADUATED!

UNFORTUNATELY, MY CURRENT JOB HASN'T ***ALLOWED*** ME ENOUGH TIME TO ***DO*** THAT!

SO I FIGURE ***THIS*** IS THE ***LEAST*** I CAN DO TO ***MAKE UP*** FOR A ***FAILED PROMISE*** I MADE TO MYSELF!

DO YOU MIND IF I ASK WHAT PUT ***YOU*** ON THE STREETS? YOU ***DON'T*** HAVE TO ANSWER, IF YOU DON'T ***WANT*** TO!

HMMM! A **RICH GUY** WITH A **HEART OF GOLD** AND A **GUILTY CONSCIENCE!** THE **PERFECT MARK!**

HE'S WORTH MY PRIMARY, **GRADE-A** BACK-STORY OF **BULLSHIT**! HEH-HEH!

MY PARENTS SENT ME HERE **FOUR YEARS AGO** FROM OUR HOME IN **CHINA** TO STUDY IN ONE OF **YOUR** UNIVERSITIES!

BUT **TWO** YEARS AGO, MY FATHER WAS **FALSELY ACCUSED** OF **SPYING** AND **IMPRISONED**! I WANTED TO GO BACK AND **HELP** HIM, BUT HE **INSISTED** I STAY **HERE** WHERE I'D BE **SAFER** AND COULD **CONTINUE** MY STUDIES!

UNFORTUNATELY, THE GOVERNMENT ALSO **SEIZED** MY FAMILY'S **ASSETS**, INCLUDING THE **MONEY** I HAD HERE FOR **COLLEGE**! AS A RESULT, I HAD TO **DROP OUT** OF COLLEGE AND WAS NO LONGER **ELIGIBLE** FOR A **STUDENT VISA!**

I'VE PRETTY MUCH BEEN ON THE STREETS, **HIDING** FROM THE **INS**, AND **ON MY OWN,** SINCE THEN!

YOU'VE BEEN OUT THERE, ON YOUR OWN, FOR ***TWO YEARS?*** THAT'S BOTH SAD ***AND*** IMPRESSIVE!

THE ***MEN*** WHO YOU SAID WERE ***AFTER*** YOU?

IF THEY'VE BEEN AFTER YOU FOR A COUPLE OF ***DAYS***, THEN ***THEY*** MUST MEAN ***BUSINESS*** AND IT'S ***NOT SAFE*** OUT THERE FOR YOU RIGHT NOW!

DON'T BE ***TOO*** IMPRESSED! THERE ARE ***MANY*** THINGS I'VE ***HAD*** TO DO TO SURVIVE THAT I'M ***NOT*** VERY ***PROUD*** OF!

ONE OF WHICH HAS GOTTEN ME INTO A ***LOT*** OF TROUBLE ***RECENTLY***!

A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO, I ***STOLE*** A PHONE FROM THEM TO TRADE FOR ***FOOD***! UNFORTUNATELY, IT TURNS OUT THEY ***AREN'T*** THE KIND OF PEOPLE WHO ***LIKE*** BEING ROBBED!

NOTHING LIKE MIXING A ***LITTLE*** BIT OF ***TRUTH*** INTO THE STORY TO MAKE IT MORE ***BELIEVABLE***!

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT STAYING ***HERE***... FOR A FEW DAYS! AT ***LEAST*** UNTIL THEY'VE GIVEN UP ***LOOKING*** FOR YOU!

OF ***COURSE*** YOU COULD! THERE ARE ***FOUR BEDROOMS*** UPSTAIRS THAT I ***DON'T*** KNOW WHAT TO ***DO*** WITH!

BESIDES KEEPING YOU ***SAFE***, IT WOULD ***ALSO*** GIVE YOU TIME TO ***CLEAN UP*** AND GET YOUR ***STRENGTH*** BACK!

THEN WE CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT OUR ***NEXT STEPS*** WILL BE TO GET YOU ***BACK*** ON YOUR FEET AGAIN!

OF ***COURSE***!

BINGO!!

THAT... THAT IS ***WAY***TOO MUCH TO ASK! I COULDN'T ***POSSIBLY*** ACCEPT SUCH A ***KIND*** OFFER!

YOU... ***YOU*** WOULD DO ***ALL THAT*** FOR ***ME?***

THEN I WOULD BE A FOOL **NOT** TO ACCEPT YOUR VERY **KIND** OFFER!

BUT **ONLY** FOR A **FEW DAYS!** BY THEN, I'M **SURE** YOU'LL BE **HAPPY** TO BE **RID** OF ME!

NONSENSE! YOU'LL STAY AS **LONG** AS **NECESSARY!**

BY THE WAY, **MY** NAME IS **REX**... REX DAWES!

I AM **FOREVER** IN YOUR DEBT, MR. DAWES!

PLEASE, YOU HAVE **GOT** TO CALL ME **REX**! AND **WHAT** SHOULD I CALL **YOU?**

MY **GIVEN** NAME IS **JUN HIE JIN!** BUT MY CLASSMATES AND PROFESSORS COULDN'T **PRONOUNCE** IT CORRECTLY, SO I TOLD THEM TO **JUST** CALL ME **DANIEL!** IT WAS THE NAME OF A CHARACTER FROM A **MOVIE** I LIKED **VERY** MUCH!

SINCE I WASN'T **SURE** HOW INTERESTED **INS** WAS IN ME, I DECIDED TO **ALSO** CHANGE MY **LAST** NAME FROM **JIN** TO SOMETHING MUCH MORE **COMMON**!

SO I **NOW** GO BY **DANIEL KIM!** BUT, OF COURSE, **YOU** MAY CALL ME **DANIEL!**

A LITTLE **ELABORATE**, BUT I ALWAYS HAVE **TROUBLE** KEEPING TRACK OF **FAKE NAMES** AND **THIS'LL** KEEP HIM FROM DOING ANY **SEARCHES** FOR INFO ON **"DANIEL KIM"!** HEH-HEH!

ALL RIGHT, **DANIEL**! AFTER WE GET SOME **FOOD** IN YOU, WE'LL GO PICK OUT A BEDROOM!

I SLEEP IN THE **MAIN** BEDROOM DOWN HERE, SO **YOU'LL** HAVE THE WHOLE **UPSTAIRS** TO YOURSELF!

YOU'LL **EVEN** HAVE YOUR OWN **BATHROOM** UP THERE!

YOUR **KINDNESS** IS **OVERWHELMING**, REX!

A KINDNESS
I PLAN TO TAKE
EXTREME
ADVANTAGE OF!
HEH-HEH!

Later on, after breakfast and a chance to clean up...

OH, **MAN**! I'D **FORGOTTEN** WHAT A **LONG, HOT** SHOWER FELT LIKE! IT WAS **AMAZING**!

AND I THINK I LOST **THREE POUNDS** OF NOTHING BUT **FILTH!**

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AND THIS **BED** IS THE **SOFTEST** THING I'VE LAID ON SINCE THE OLD MAN SENT ME OFF TO COLLEGE!


MAN! HE'S EVEN GIVING ME SOME OF HIS CLOTHES TO WEAR! NOT THAT THEY'LL FIT, BUT THEY'RE SURE AS FUCK A LOT BETTER THAN THOSE DISGUSTING RAGS I WAS WEARING!


SO, UNLESS I WANT ALL THIS TO GO AWAY IN A FEW DAYS, I'D BETTER DO SOME SERIOUS THINKING!

A little while later...

Knock, knock!

DID YOU *FIND* EVERYTHING YOU NEED IN THERE, DANIEL?

YES, *I DID!* PLEASE, COME ON IN!

WELL, YOU ***DEFINITELY*** LOOK A ***LOT*** BETTER THAN YOU DID A FEW HOURS AGO!

AND I ***FEEL*** SO MUCH BETTER, TOO!

I WISH THE CLOTHES ***FIT*** BETTER, BUT IT'S THE ***BEST*** I COULD COME UP WITH SINCE WE'RE OBVIOUSLY ***NOT*** THE SAME SIZE!

THEY'RE ***STILL*** WONDERFUL! THANK YOU ***SO*** MUCH!

NOT TO BE ***RUDE***, BUT I ***REALLY*** THOUGHT THE BATHROOM WOULD BE A LOT ***MESSIER*** AFTER YOUR SHOWER... CONSIDERING HOW ***DIRTY*** YOU WERE!

OH, ***IT WAS!*** FORTUNATELY, ONE OF THE BOXES HERE WAS MARKED ***CLEANING SUPPLIES,*** SO I TOOK IT UPON MYSELF TO ***CLEAN UP*** THE MESS I LEFT!

AND WHILE I WAS AT IT, I FOUND A FEW ***OTHER*** THINGS FOR THE BEDROOM! I ***HOPE*** YOU DON'T ***MIND***!

NOT AT ALL! IN FACT, I'M ***IMPRESSED*** YOU HAD THE INITIATIVE TO DO SO!

WELL, ***ONE*** THING I'VE LEARNED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS IS TO MAKE THE ***BEST*** OF ***WHATEVER*** SITUATION YOU FIND YOURSELF IN!

THAT'S A VERY ***WISE*** MANTRA TO LIVE BY!

IF YOU'RE UP FOR IT, I THOUGHT WE'D GO GET YOU SOME ***BETTER FITTING*** CLOTHES! HOW'S ***THAT*** SOUND?

THAT'S VERY ***KIND*** OF YOU BUT ***UNNECESSARY!*** THESE ARE ***MORE*** THAN ENOUGH!

NONSENSE! THEY'RE PRACTICALLY ***HANGING*** ON YOU!

WELL, IF YOU ***INSIST***, I CAN JUST ***GIVE*** YOU MY ***SIZES***! I ***REALIZE*** YOU MAY BE A LITTLE ***RELUCTANT*** BEING SEEN WITH ME!

I NOTICED THERE ARE SEVERAL ***CONSIGNMENT*** SHOPS BETWEEN HERE AND DOWNTOWN...


WHY ON EARTH WOULD I HAVE A PROBLEM BEING SEEN WITH YOU?
THESE ARE GOING TO BE YOUR CLOTHES AND YOU SHOULD BE THE ONE TO PICK THEM OUT! SO I REALLY THINK YOU SHOULD COME ALONG!
AND I THINK WE CAN DO A LITTLE BETTER THAN A CONSIGNMENT STORE!
I'LL MEET YOU DOWNSTAIRS IN FIVE MINUTES!

YEAH... HE'S ***STILL*** NOT SURE IF HE WANTS TO LEAVE ME ***ALONE*** IN THE HOUSE!

DON'T ***BLAME*** HIM! ***I*** SURE AS ***FUCK*** WOULDN'T TRUST ME! HEH-HEH!

SO IT LOOKS LIKE ***BUILDING*** SOME ***TRUST*** IS MY ***FIRST*** HURDLE IN ***EXTENDING*** MY STAY HERE!

A while later, outside a mall in a different part of town...

I **HOPE** YOU DON'T PLAN ON BUYING ANY **MORE** CLOTHES FOR ME, REX! THIS IS **ALREADY** MORE THAN ENOUGH!

YOU'RE BEING SO **GENEROUS** IT'S ALMOST **OVERWHELMING**!

I ONLY BOUGHT YOU A **COUPLE** OF OUTFITS AND A BUNCH OF **UNDERWEAR**! I WAS PLANNING ON SEVERAL **MORE** STOPS OUT HERE BEFORE WE WERE DONE!

IT'S **NOTHING**, REALLY! I...

UH-OH! THAT LOOKS LIKE DAVE SEYMOUR FROM THE OFFICE! JUST THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD MISUNDERSTAND THE SITUATION IF HE SAW ME WITH DANIEL!

UMMM, DANIEL! WHY DON'T YOU GO ON BACK TO THE CAR! I'LL BE THERE IN JUST A MINUTE!

OF COURSE, REX!

JUST AS I THOUGHT! AS SOON AS I SAW THAT PANICKED LOOK ON HIS FACE I COULD TELL SOMEONE HE KNEW WAS NEARBY!

YES, WHY WOULD YOU HAVE A PROBLEM BEING SEEN WITH ME, REX? NOT QUITE AS ALTRUISTIC AS YOU THINK YOU ARE, EH?

IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE YOUR FRIEND SAW ME, SO IT LOOKS LIKE YOU DODGED THE BULLET THIS TIME!

MAKES ME WONDER WHAT REX WOULD'VE SAID IF HE HAD SEEN ME!

A few minutes later...

I NEED TO ***APOLOGIZE*** FOR WHAT JUST HAPPENED!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I SENT YOU OUT HERE ***AHEAD*** OF ME BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT ONE OF MY ***COWORKERS*** TO ***SEE*** YOU WITH ME!

HOLY SHIT! THE ***TRUTH?*** HE REALLY ***IS*** A BOY SCOUT!

WELL, I ***GET*** WHY, OF COURSE! HANGING AROUND WITH THE HOMELESS IS ***HARDLY*** GOOD FOR YOUR IMAGE!

NO, THAT'S ***NOT*** WHAT I MEAN! IT'S MY ***COWORKERS*** THAT ARE THE PROBLEM!

I ***DON'T*** UNDERSTAND!

THE LAW FIRM I WORK FOR ***TOUTS*** ITSELF AS BEING VERY ***LIBERAL***, BUT IN ***REALITY***, MOST ***EVERYONE*** THERE HAS VERY ***CONSERVATIVE*** VALUES!

IF ANY OF ***THEM*** SAW ME WITH YOU, ***REGARDLESS*** OF WHAT I TELL THEM, THEY'D ***JUMP*** TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING... ***UNSEEMLY*** GOING ON BETWEEN US!

JUST BECAUSE WE'RE ***BOTH*** MEN? THAT'S ***RIDICULOUS***!

THAT'S THE ***WAY*** THEY THINK! ***ESPECIALLY*** SINCE I'M ***UNMARRIED*** AND HAVE ***NO GIRLFRIEND!*** I'M ***SURE*** THERE ARE PROBABLY ***ALREADY*** RUMORS FLOATING AROUND ABOUT ***ME*** BEING ***GAY!***

ARE YOU?

NO... I'M NOT! I'M JUST TOO ***WORK-ORIENTED*** TO HAVE ***TIME*** FOR A SOCIAL LIFE! SOMETHING ***THEY*** DON'T SEEM TO ***UNDERSTAND!***

WELL, I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO **LOSE** YOUR **JOB** BECAUSE OF **ME!** SO MAYBE STAYING AT YOUR PLACE **ISN'T** SUCH A **GOOD** IDEA AFTER ALL!

ARE YOU **SURE?**

IF **YOU'RE** OKAY WITH DOING THAT, THEN I GUESS **I** AM TOO!

AND **WITHOUT** EVEN **TRYING**, MY STAY HAS GONE FROM A COUPLE OF **DAYS** TO "AS LONG AS **NECESSARY!**"

THIS IS ALMOST **TOO** EASY! HEH-HEH!

I'M **NOT** GOING TO LET A BUNCH OF **NARROW-MINDED** PEOPLE KEEP **ME** FROM DOING WHAT'S **RIGHT!**

HELL, YOU CAN STAY AT **MY PLACE** FOR AS **LONG** AS **NECESSARY!**

WE'LL JUST **HAVE** TO BE A LITTLE MORE **CAREFUL** ABOUT BEING **SEEN** TOGETHER IN PUBLIC! **THAT'S** ALL!

A few days later...

FINALLY, THE *LAST* BOX UNPACKED! I KNOW REX DIDN'T *ASK* ME TO DO THIS, BUT IF *HE* FEELS THAT I'M JUST LYING AROUND *FREELOADING*, HE MAY START TO *REGRET* HAVING ME AROUND!

BUT I FIGURE THE MORE ***USEFUL*** I MAKE MYSELF, ***WITHOUT*** BEING IN HIS ***WAY*** ALL THE TIME, WILL GO A ***LONG WAY*** INTO ***EXTENDING*** MY STAY HERE!

HELL, I'VE ***EVEN*** STARTED DOING A LITTLE ***COOKING*** HERE AND THERE! NOTHING ***GOURMET*** OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT, BUT ***JUST ENOUGH*** TO BE ***CONVENIENT*** FOR HIM!

SO CONVENIENT, IN FACT, HE MAY JUST ***UPGRADE*** MY ***TEMPORARY*** STATUS TO SOMETHING MORE ***PERMANENT!***

THE ***ONE DRAWBACK*** IS HAVING TO ***STAY PUT*** ALL THE TIME, THANKS TO REX'S FUCKING ***HOMOPHOBIC COWORKERS!***

AT ***LEAST*** HIS TV STREAMS PRETTY MUCH ***EVERY CHANNEL AVAILABLE!*** BUT WHAT ***GOOD*** IS INTERNET ACCESS WITHOUT MY ***OWN*** COMPUTER OR PHONE?

SIGH! ALL IN GOOD TIME, DANIEL! ***ALL*** IN GOOD TIME!

SOUNDS LIKE ***HIM*** GETTING HOME NOW!

TIME TO MAKE ***MYSELF*** A LITTLE ***SCARCE*** SO I'M NOT ALWAYS THE ***FIRST*** THING HE ***SEES*** WHEN HE GETS HOME!

ALSO GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO NOTICE, ***ON HIS OWN***, THAT ***ALL THE BOXES*** HAVE BEEN TAKEN CARE OF BY HIS EXTREMELY ***HELPFUL*** AND ***INDISPENSABLE*** HOUSEMATE! HEH-HEH!

YEAH, **THAT'S** HIM! **I'D** KNOW THE SOUND OF **THAT** ENGINE PURRING A **MILE** AWAY!

SIGH! JUST **COUNTIN'** THE DAYS TILL HE LETS **ME** DRIVE THAT BEAUTY, AND...

WAIT A MINUTE! WHAT THE FUCK!

PLEASE TELL ME I'M SEEING THINGS! PLEASE TELL ME I'M SEEING THINGS!


IT IS! FUCK! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
IT'S THE GODDAMN SIKORSKY BROTHERS! HERE! IN THIS PART OF TOWN!
THEY CAN'T STILL BE LOOKING FOR ME... CAN THEY?

OH MY GOD, DANIEL! THE PLACE LOOKS AMAZING!

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THIS ALL BY YOURSELF!

UH... THANKS.

WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU ***LOOK*** LIKE YOUR BEST FRIEND JUST ***DIED***!

NOT ***EXACTLY***... BUT, YOU'RE ***NOT*** FAR OFF!


THERE'S
SOMETHING I
NEED TO TELL YOU!

A few minutes later, After a little bit of *uncharacteristic* truth from Daniel...

I ***KNOW*** I SHOULD'VE TOLD YOU ***MORE*** ABOUT ***WHO*** WAS CHASING ME AND ***WHY***, BUT I WAS AFRAID YOU ***WOULDN'T*** HAVE LET ME STAY!

AND ***NOW*** THAT THEY'RE ***STILL*** LOOKING FOR ME... ***EVEN*** WAY OUT ***HERE***, IT MEANS I'M ***ALSO*** PUTTING ***YOU*** IN DANGER!

SO I THINK THE ***BEST*** THING IS FOR YOU TO JUST ***DRIVE ME*** TO THE ***FAR*** SIDE OF TOWN AND ***DROP ME OFF!***

NO... I DON'T THINK I ***WILL!***

ALTHOUGH I **AGREE** THAT YOU **SHOULD'VE** TOLD ME ABOUT THOSE DRUG-RUNNERS **SOONER**, THAT'S WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE! THE **MAIN** THING **NOW** IS KEEPING YOU **SAFE**!

FIRST THING TOMORROW, I'LL HAVE A **SECURITY SYSTEM** INSTALLED! AND WE'LL **ALSO** JUST **DOUBLE** OUR EFFORTS AT KEEPING YOU **OUT OF SIGHT!**

FOR AS **LONG** AS IT **TAKES** UNTIL WE'RE **SURE** YOU'RE SAFE!

FOR... FOR HOW LONG?

A few days later...

HMPH! NOT TOO CRAZY ABOUT THE NEW, SHAVED LOOK! BUT AS REX POINTED OUT, THE LESS I LOOK LIKE STREET SCUM, THE BETTER!

MAN! I ***KNEW*** IT WAS A RISK TELLING REX THE ***TRUTH*** ABOUT THE SIKORSKYS, BUT IT'S REALLY ***PAID OFF***.. IN ***SPADES!***

AFTER DOING A LITTLE RESEARCH, HE FOUND OUT ***JUST*** HOW ***DANGEROUS*** THEY REALLY ***ARE*** AND HAS ***DOUBLE-DOWNED*** ON KEEPING ME HERE SAFE... ***INDEFINITELY!***

HE SAID HE ALSO ***TIPPED OFF*** A FRIEND OF HIS IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ABOUT ***WHERE*** THEY COULD FIND THE ***CELL PHONE*** I STOLE AND PAWNED!

I DON'T HAVE ANY ***ILLUSIONS*** ABOUT THE COPS ***SHUTTING DOWN*** THE ***SIKORSKYS,*** BUT HOPEFULLY IT'LL ***AT LEAST*** KEEP THEM ***TOO BUSY*** TO WORRY ABOUT ***ME!***

OH YEAH!
LIFE IS GOOD!


WELL NOW...
ISN'T THAT
INTERESTING!

Ding, dong!

COMING!

HUH?! WHAT THE DEVIL IS SHE DOING HERE?!

MRS. BURNS! THIS IS QUITE THE SURPRISE!

FORGIVE ME! SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE... GLORIA?

REX, DEAR... IF YOU CALL ME "MRS. BURNS" ONE MORE TIME I'M GOING TO TELL MY HUSBAND THAT WE'VE BEEN SNEAKING OFF TO THE SUPPLY ROOM TOGETHER EVERY DAY FOR THE LAST MONTH!

ASK ME IN AND I'LL TELL YOU!

I'M SORRY IF IT SEEMS I'M ***INTRUDING*** ON YOUR FREE TIME, BUT ***YOU*** DIDN'T GIVE ME ***ANY CHOICE!***

BY BEING CONSPICUOUSLY ***UNAVAILABLE*** WHENEVER I STOPPED BY YOUR OFFICE! IF I DIDN'T ***KNOW*** BETTER, I'D SAY ***YOU*** WERE ***AVOIDING ME!***

UMMM... ***SURE***! PLEASE, COME IN!

AND ***HOW*** DID I DO ***THAT?***

CRAP! LET'S HOPE DANIEL ***HEARS*** OUR VOICES AND STAYS UPSTAIRS AND ***OUT OF SIGHT!***


YOU CAN TELL ME THE **REAL** REASON YOU **REFUSE** TO ATTEND **ANY** OF OUR GET-TOGETHERS... LIKE THE ONE WE'RE HAVING **NEXT** WEEKEND!
REALLY? THE HOUSE LOOKS **WONDERFUL** AND **I** DON'T SEE ANY **BOXES** THAT NEED UNPACKING!
TRY AGAIN, DEAR!
WELL, YOU'RE HERE **NOW**! SO **WHAT** CAN I **DO** FOR YOU, GLORIA?
I **TOLD** YOU WHY! I HAVE SO MUCH **WORK** TO DO ON THE NEW HOUSE!

THAT MUST BE THE BOSSES HOT WIFE THAT'S BEEN TRYING TO GET INTO REX'S SHORTS!

GO FOR IT, MAN! I KNOW I WOULD! HEH-HEH!

WELL, YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, GLORIA... I'M THE ONLY UNMARRIED JUNIOR PARTNER IN THE FIRM!

I'D JUST FEEL A LITTLE OUT OF PLACE BEING THE ONLY ONE THERE WHO CAME ALONE!

OH, IS THAT ALL? WELL I HAVE THE PERFECT SOLUTION FOR THAT!

WHICH IS?


YOU COULD JUST BRING YOUR LITTLE FRIEND FROM UPSTAIRS
OH SHIT!!
UMMM... WHO?

OH SHIT! SHE MUST'VE SEEN ME THROUGH THE WINDOW WHEN SHE PULLED UP!

FUCK, FUCK, FUCK! REX IS ABOUT TO GET INTO SOME BIG TROUBLE WITH THAT BITCH, AND IT'S MY FAULT!

I'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING... AND DO IT FAST, OR I'M GONNA FIND MYSELF BACK OUT ON THE STREETS!

I DON'T SEE **WHY** YOU'RE SO ADAMANTLY **DENYING** IT, REX! BECAUSE I **DEFINITELY** SAW **SOMEONE** IN ONE OF YOUR UPSTAIRS **BEDROOMS** THROUGH THE WINDOW!

AT **FIRST** I THOUGHT IT WAS **YOU!** BUT EVEN THROUGH THE **TINTED WINDOW,** I COULD **TELL** THE PERSON I SAW TOWELING OFF UP THERE WAS **DARK-HAIRED** AND **SIGNIFICANTLY** SMALLER!

DAMN IT! SHE OBVIOUSLY SAW **DANIEL** UP THERE! I CAN ONLY HOPE SHE'S MORE **OPEN-MINDED** THAN EVERYONE **ELSE** AT THE FIRM!


SO 'FESS UP, DEAR! JUST WHO ARE YOU HIDING UP THERE? HMMM?
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK, GLORIA! YOU SEE, I...
REX, HONEY! HAVE YOU SEEN MY PANTIES?

I COULD **SWEAR** THEY WERE AT THE FOOT OF THE **BED** THIS MORNING, AND...

OH MY GOD!
I DIDN'T **KNOW**
SOMEONE **ELSE** WAS
HERE!


THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING! PLEASE, JUST PRETEND I WAS NEVER HERE!

ACTUALLY, **THAT'S EXACTLY** WHAT I THOUGHT! *GIGGLE!*

SHE'S **ADORABLE**, REX! I CAN'T IMAGINE **WHY** YOU WERE TRYING TO **HIDE** HER!

Slam!

WELL, UHHH... I WASN'T REALLY **TRYING** TO **HIDE** HER! IT'S JUST THAT...

TUT, TUT! YOU CAN TELL ME ***ALL*** THE ***JUICY DETAILS*** WHEN YOU BRING HER TO OUR PARTY NEXT WEEKEND!

AND I ***ABSOLUTELY, POSITIVELY*** WILL ***NOT*** TAKE ***"NO"*** FOR AN ANSWER!

SIGH! GREAT!
JUST GREAT!

A few minutes later, after Gloria has left...

I WAS *JUST* TRYING TO *HELP!*

BY ROLLING UP A PAIR OF *SOCKS* INSIDE OF A TOWEL AND *PRETENDING* TO BE MY *GIRLFRIEND?* HOW IS THAT EVEN *REMOTELY* HELPING?

YOU **TOLD** ME HOW **PREDATORY** THAT WOMAN IS! SHE CAME HERE WEARING **THAT DRESS** WITH ONLY **ONE THING** ON HER MIND!

BUT SEEING **ME** IN THE WINDOW **DISTRACTED** HER... AT LEAST A **LITTLE** BIT!

YOU WERE ABOUT TO **TELL** HER THE **TRUTH** ABOUT ME, **WEREN'T** YOU?

WHICH **COULD'VE** GOTTEN **YOU** FIRED! **THAT'S** WHY I **DID** WHAT I **DID!**

THIS **STILL** DOESN'T **EXPLAIN** WHY YOU...

WELL, **YEAH**... I FIGURED SHE HAD ME **CORNERED!**

HAVING A **GIRLFRIEND** IN YOUR HOUSE IS **NOT** GOING TO GET YOU FIRED! AND IT GIVES **YOU** A **REASON** TO KEEP THAT **BITCH-IN-HEAT** AT ARMS LENGTH!

WHAT **I** DID KILLED **TWO BIRDS** WITH **ONE STONE!**

YEAH! BUT I GOT **ESPECIALLY** GOOD AT IT WHILE LIVING ON THE STREETS! I PRETTY MUCH **HAD** TO!

I **STILL** DON'T GET IT!

I... I GUESS IT **DID**, DIDN'T IT?

SIGH! HAVE YOU **ALWAYS** BEEN SUCH A **QUICK THINKER,** DANIEL?

I CAN ONLY **IMAGINE!**

YOU KNOW, WHEN I ***FIRST*** HEARD YOUR VOICE FROM UPSTAIRS, I ***ACTUALLY*** THOUGHT THERE WAS A ***WOMAN*** UP THERE! ***WHERE*** DID YOU LEARN TO ***TALK*** LIKE THAT?

WOW! I... I ***WON'T*** ASK ABOUT THE DETAILS!

ANOTHER LITTLE ***SOMETHING*** I PICKED UP ON THE STREETS! THERE WERE A ***LOT*** OF THINGS I ***HAD*** TO DO TO SURVIVE THAT I'M ***NOT*** VERY ***PROUD*** OF... AND SOUNDING LIKE A GIRL WAS ***ONE*** OF THEM!

THANK YOU. I ***APPRECIATE*** THAT!

YEAH, I'LL KEEP THOSE "DETAILS", BOTH REAL ***AND*** IMAGINED, ON ***ICE*** UNTIL I REALLY ***NEED*** THEM!


WELL, YOUR IMPROMPTU IMPERSONATION MAY HAVE HELD OFF GLORIA TODAY, BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, IT MAY HAVE CAUSED A BIGGER PROBLEM!
LIKE WHAT?
LIKE SHE'S INSISTING ON MEETING YOU, MY NEW GIRLFRIEND, UP CLOSE NEXT WEEKEND AT THEIR PARTY!
OH SHIT!
AND SHE DEFINITELY LEFT ME WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT NON-COMPLIANCE WITH HER WISHES WAS NOT AN OPTION!
CRAP! WHAT DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD DO THEN?

YEAH, I DON'T ***KNOW*** ABOUT THAT! FROM WHAT ***YOU'VE*** TOLD ME, SHE'S A PRETTY ***SMART LADY!*** SHE ***SAW*** MY FACE AND ***HEARD*** MY VOICE! I DON'T THINK ***SHE'D*** BE FOOLED BY AN ***ACTRESS!***

AND ***NO FUCKIN' WAY*** AM I GONNA LET SOME RANDOM ***THIRD PERSON*** TAKE THE ***CREDIT*** FOR FIXING THIS! ***SHIT!*** THERE'S ONLY ***ONE*** THING TO DO!

I'M NOT SURE! MAYBE I COULD ***HIRE*** SOMEONE... AN ***ACTRESS*** WHO LOOKS ***ENOUGH*** LIKE YOU TO ***FOOL*** GLORIA!

THEN WHAT DO ***YOU*** SUGGEST?

LET ME DO IT!

TAKE ME TO THE PARTY... AS YOUR GIRLFRIEND! I CAN PULL IT OFF! I KNOW I CAN!

WHAT?

WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU WANT TO DO THIS?

IT'S NOT THAT I WANT TO... I HAVE TO! I'M THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS!

EVER SINCE YOU TOOK ME IN, YOU'VE HAD TO DEAL WITH NOTHING BUT STRESS... HIDING ME FROM YOUR COWORKERS AND THOSE THUGS I STUPIDLY STOLE FROM!

AND LIKE YOU SAID, MY DECISION TO PRETEND TO BE YOUR GIRLFRIEND IS THE REASON WHY YOU HAVE TO SHOW UP NEXT WEEK... WITH ME ON YOUR ARM!

NOW THAT'S HOW YOU DO IT... TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT ALL, BUT SLIP A LITTLE GUILT BACK IN HIS DIRECTION AND SEE IF HE BITES!

I DON'T SEE ***HOW*** WE CAN ***POSSIBLY*** PULL THAT OFF!

WHY NOT? GUYS HAVE BEEN PRETENDING TO BE WOMAN, ***CONVINCINGLY***, FOR ***YEARS!*** IT'S ***NOT*** THAT HARD IF YOU KNOW ***WHERE*** TO GET HELP DOING IT!

AND ***YOU*** KNOW ***WHERE*** THESE PLACES ARE?

NOT ***EXACTLY***. BUT I ***KNEW*** A FEW PEOPLE BACK ON THE STREETS WHO ***OBVIOUSLY*** DID!

SIGH! I HATE TO **SAY** THIS, BUT I THINK **YOU'RE RIGHT!**

BUT THERE'S **NO WAY YOU'RE** GOING ANYWHERE **NEAR** DOWNTOWN! **I'LL** DO SOME **RESEARCH** AND FIND A PLACE THAT'LL HELP US OUT... **DISCREETLY!**

OKAY, REX! AND, AGAIN... I'M **SORRY** FOR PUTTING YOU **THROUGH** ALL THIS!

DON'T ***EVER*** THINK THAT ***ANY*** OF THIS IS ***YOUR*** FAULT, DANIEL, BECAUSE ***IT ISN'T!***

IT'S ALL JUST A ***CONFLUENCE*** OF ***CIRCUMSTANCES*** THAT HAVE PUT US IN ***THIS*** SITUATION!

AND THE ***TWO OF US*** WILL JUST HAVE TO DO OUR ***BEST*** TO ***DEAL*** WITH IT... NO MATTER ***HOW... UNIQUE*** THE SOLUTION MIGHT BE!

I'LL START DOING SOME RESEARCH ***RIGHT NOW*** AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT I FIND OUT!

OKAY, REX! IF THERE'S ANYTHING ***I*** CAN DO TO HELP, ***PLEASE*** LET ME KNOW!

WHEW! ***THAT*** COULD'VE GONE A ***LOT*** WORSE THAN IT DID!

IN FACT, IF I PLAY IT ***RIGHT***, THIS ***COULD*** ACTUALLY ***HELP*** MY SITUATION!

NOT THAT I'M **CRAZY** ABOUT **DRESSING UP** AS A **CHICK** FOR THAT PARTY, BUT DOING SO SHOWS REX THE **EXTREMES** I'LL GO TO **JUST** TO KEEP **HIM** OUT OF TROUBLE!

PROBLEM **IS**, THOUGH, I'M **REALLY** GONNA HAVE TO **SELL IT** IF THAT **COUGAR'S** GONNA **BUY** IT!

BUT IF I **DO**, AND SHE **DOES**, THEN **MY** CHANCES OF BECOMING A MORE **PERMANENT** RESIDENT HERE ARE GONNA **SKYROCKET!**

AND CONSIDERING WHAT'S **WAITING** FOR ME BACK THERE ON THE **STREETS**, I'LL DO PRETTY MUCH **ANYTHING** TO KEEP FROM GOING **BACK!**

COME TO THINK OF IT, DANIEL, IF YOU **DO** WANT TO HELP, THEN MAYBE **BOTH** OF US SHOULD BE WORKING ON THIS RESEARCH!

SO I'M GOING TO GO OUT AND GET YOU A **LAPTOP**... AND PROBABLY A **PHONE**, TOO, WHILE I'M AT IT!

IT JUST MAKES **SENSE** FOR YOU TO **HAVE** THEM SINCE YOU'RE **STUCK HERE** ALL DAY BY **YOURSELF**!

WOW! OKAY, REX! AND... **THANKS!**

OH, **YEAH**! AND IT'S ALREADY **STARTED!** HEH-HEH!

The next day...

ARE YOU ***SURE*** THIS IS THE RIGHT PLACE, REX? IT LOOKS PRETTY ***HIGH-DOLLAR!***

CONSIDERING WHAT ***WE*** HAVE TO DO IN ***LESS*** THAN A ***WEEK***, PRICE IS THE ***LEAST*** THING ***I'M*** WORRIED ABOUT!


Carli Amor
REVEAL
BUT ALL I SEE IS A BUNCH OF LINGERIE! I'M GOING TO NEED A LOT MORE THAN JUST BRAS AND PANTIES TO FOOL EVERYONE NEXT WEEKEND!
WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE PLACE AGAIN?
I KNOW! BUT THEIR WEBSITE SAYS THEY ALSO SPECIALIZE IN "TRANSFORMATIONS"!
IN FACT, ALL RATINGS FOR THIS PLACE ARE 5.0S ACROSS THE BOARD! SO THEY MUST BE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT!
WELCOME TO MISS LOLA'S, GENTLEMEN!

I, OF COURSE, AM LOLA!

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU TWO TODAY?


REVEAL
"PRETTY GOOD WORK" IS AN INSULT! I AM UNPARALLELED IN MY TRANSFORMATIONAL SKILLS!
IN TWENTY YEARS OF BEING IN BUSINESS, I HAVE NEVER HAD ONE DISSATISFIED CLIENT!
I UNDERSTAND YOU DO PRETTY GOOD WORK IN MAKING MEN LOOK LIKE WOMEN!
WELL I SINCERELY HOPE I WON'T BE YOUR FIRST, BECAUSE MY FRIEND HERE NEEDS TO BE MY DATE... MY ATTRACTIVE, FEMALE DATE FOR A PARTY NEXT SATURDAY!
CAN YOU HELP HIM LOOK THE PART?


DARLINGS! GIVE ME A FEW HOURS AND I COULD HAVE THIS SCRUMPTIOUS LITTLE MORSEL OF A MAN LOOKING LIKE GEMMA CHAN'S YOUNGER AND HOTTER SISTER!
OF COURSE... BUT ONLY IF SHE WERE DOING A PHOTO-SHOOT FOR DUCK-WADERS IN "FIELD AND STREAM"!
REALLY?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

REVEAL

MAKING YOUR FRIEND HERE **LOOK** THE PART IS **EASY!** BUT CONSIDERING HOW HE **SWAGGERED** IN HERE AND THE **WAY** HE'S STANDING **NOW**, HE NEEDS A **LOT** OF **WORK** ON HIS **MANNERISMS** IF HE'S GOING TO BE **AT ALL** CONVINCING!

SO I NEED TO WORK ON THE WAY I **WALK** AND **STAND!** I CAN DO **THAT**... PIECE OF **CAKE!**

IT'S **SO** MUCH **MORE** THAN THAT, DARLING! AND IT HAS TO **ALL** BE **SECOND NATURE** TO YOU IF YOU WANT TO CONVINCE **ANYONE!**

FORTUNATELY, MY SCHEDULE IS VERY **OPEN** THIS WEEK SO I **HAVE** THE TIME!

HOWEVER, I SHOULD **WARN** YOU, I'M **NOT CHEAP!**

PRICE IS **NOT** A PROBLEM!

ONE OF MY **FAVORITE PHRASES** IN THE WHOLE WORLD!

SO **WHEN** DO YOU WANT TO GET STARTED?

IMMEDIATELY!

WHAT? LIKE RIGHT NOW?

AND HOW OFTEN WILL THAT BE?

WELL, FOR NOW, I'M JUST GOING TO TAKE YOUR MEASUREMENTS AND A FEW PICTURES SO I CAN SEE WHAT I HAVE TO WORK WITH!

I'LL ALSO GIVE YOU SOME HOMEWORK TO DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT HERE WORKING WITH ME!

OH, AT LEAST A COUPLE OF HOURS EVERY DAY! OF COURSE, I'LL NEED YOU HERE BRIGHT AND EARLY ON SATURDAY FOR THE FULL PHYSICAL TRANSFORMATION!

I'LL SEE THAT HE GETS HERE WHENEVER YOU NEED HIM!


FABULOUS! WHY DON'T YOU AND I GO IN THE BACK AND WORK OUT THE FINANCIAL DETAILS, OKAY?
SEE YOU TOMORROW, HONEY! I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU!
SOUNDS GOOD! BACK IN A FEW MINUTES, DANIEL!

HMPH! SOUNDS LIKE **WAY** TOO MUCH WORK FOR **ONE** GODDAMN **PARTY**! BUT **I'M** THE ONE WHO TALKED REX INTO THIS, SO **I'M** THE ONE WHO'S GOTTA **STICK IT OUT!**

HELL, IT'S **JUST** FOR **ONE WEEK**, SO **NO** BIG DEAL!

BESIDES, AS MUCH AS I **LOVE** LIVING IN THAT **HOUSE** OF HIS, GETTING **OUT** FOR A FEW HOURS EVERY DAY WILL BE A **WELCOME CHANGE!**

AND THIS IS **ONE** PLACE THE **SIKORSKY BROTHERS** WOULD **NEVER** IN A MILLION **YEARS** COME LOOKING FOR ME! HEH-HEH!

Several hours later...

MAN, WHEN LOLA SAID SHE HAD ***HOMEWORK*** FOR ME, I WAS EXPECTING SOME KIND OF ***READING*** OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT! BUT ***NOT THIS!***

I'VE GOTTA WALK AT LEAST ***TWO MILES*** IN THESE THINGS ***EACH DAY!*** SHE ***EVEN*** MADE ME INSTALL AN APP ON THE NEW PHONE REX GAVE ME TO ***TRACK*** MY STEPS!

THIS BROAD IS ***SERIOUS!*** GUESS ***THAT'S*** WHY SHE'S CONSIDERED THE ***BEST*** AT WHAT SHE DOES!

FINALLY! TWO FUCKING MILES! IT PROBABLY WOULD'VE BEEN EASIER AND FASTER TO WALK IT OUTSIDE, BUT REX DOESN'T THINK IT'S SAFE OUT THERE YET FOR ME!

BESIDES, LOLA INSISTED I DO IT INSIDE ANYWAY TO GET USED TO NORMAL, EVERYDAY MOVEMENTS, AS SHE PUT IT!

SIGH! FINE! WHATEVER IT TAKES, I GUESS!

HOW'S THE **HOMEWORK** COMING?

GOOD! WHAT ABOUT THE **OTHER** ITEM SHE GAVE YOU? HOW'S IT **FEEL**?

BESIDES A COUPLE OF OVER-WORKED **CALF** MUSCLES, **PRETTY GOOD!** JUST FINISHED MY REQUIRED TWO MILES SO THE **SHOES** ARE COMING **OFF!**

YEAH, ***THIS*** ONE'S GONNA TAKE A LITTLE GETTING ***USED*** TO SINCE SHE WANTS ME TO WEAR IT ***24-7!***

BUT, ***SURPRISINGLY***, IT'S NOT ***TOO*** TIGHT, SO ***I*** CAN HANDLE IT!

I HAVE TO SAY, THE WAY YOU'RE ***HANDLING*** ALL THIS IS ***REMARKABLE***, DANIEL!

A ***LESSER*** PERSON WOULD BE ***GRIPING*** AND ***WHINING*** BY NOW! I KNOW ***I*** PROBABLY WOULD BE!


WELL, YOU MAY DISAGREE, BUT I STILL FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERYTHING!
THAT'S WHY I'LL DO WHATEVER LOLA WANTS TO GET US THROUGH THIS PARTY NEXT WEEKEND! NO MATTER HOW WEIRD OR UNCOMFORTABLE IT MAY SEEM!
YOU'RE AN AWESOME PERSON, DANIEL! I HOPE YOU KNOW THAT!

SO, SINCE **I** HAVE TO BE AT WORK AND **CAN'T** TAKE YOU TO LOLA'S TOMORROW OR **ANYTIME** THIS WEEK, YOU'LL **HAVE** TO TAKE AN **UBER!**

AND TO PAY FOR IT, I CREATED A **PAYFRIEND** ACCOUNT FOR YOU AND **LINKED** IT TO YOUR PHONE! SINCE YOU DON'T HAVE A DRIVERS LICENSE OR ANY **OTHER** KIND OF **ID,** I FIGURED IT WAS THE **EASIEST** WAY FOR YOU TO PAY FOR THINGS!

I'LL **ALSO** LEAVE YOU SOME **CASH** BEFORE I LEAVE TOMORROW FOR **JUST-IN-CASE** MONEY!

THAT'S **MORE** THAN AWESOME, REX! **THANKS!**

NO, **THANK YOU,** DANIEL!

I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING! GOOD NIGHT!

GOOD NIGHT, REX!

OH **YEAH**! A NEW PHONE **AND** LAPTOP, CASH AND A **PAYFRIEND** ACOUNT WITH...

HOLY SHIT! THERE'S **ENOUGH** IN THERE FOR AN UBER TO **VEGAS** AND BACK! **SWEET!**

MAN... THIS **GRAVY TRAIN** JUST KEEPS GETTING **BETTER** AND **BETTER**! HEH-HEH!

The next day, back at *Miss Lola's*...

MAN, I'D ***FORGOTTEN*** HOW ***NICE*** IT WAS SIPPING ON A PIPING HOT ***LATTE*** DURING A NICE, LONG ***UBER*** RIDE AND ***PAYING*** FOR IT ALL WITH ***MY PHONE!***

IT'S BEEN A ***LONG TIME*** SINCE I'VE EXPERIENCED ***THAT*** KIND OF LUXURIOUS ***FREEDOM!***

SO... DID MY LITTLE **PYGMALION** DO ALL THE **HOMEWORK** I ASSIGNED OF **HER** LAST NIGHT?

AND IF I WANT TO **KEEP** LIVING **THAT** LIFESTYLE, I HAVE TO **CHEERFULLY AGREE** TO **EVERYTHING** THE GOOD WITCH OF THE NORTH HERE **TELLS** ME TO DO!

SIGH! OF **COURSE** I DID!

THEN ***WHY*** THE ***DEVIL*** ARE YOU WEARING ***THOSE*** HIDEOUS THINGS INSTEAD OF THE SHOES ***I*** GAVE YOU?

I... I ***JUST*** WORE THESE ON THE DRIVE OVER! I THOUGHT I'D LOOK PRETTY ***SILLY*** WEARING THEM OUT IN ***PUBLIC!***

WELL, WITH ***THAT*** ENSEMBLE, ***ANYTHING*** WOULD LOOK SILLY! SO ***WHERE*** ARE ***MY*** SHOES?

THEY'RE IN THE ***BAG***!

THEN ***PUT THEM ON*** AND ***DON'T*** TAKE THEM ***OFF*** UNTIL ***I*** TELL YOU TO!

YES, MA'AM!

Over the next few hours, Lola puts Daniel through his paces...


refining his walk...

and other important movements...

and finally, *upgrading* his homework...

YOU WANT ME TO WEAR ***THESE*** AROUND FOR THE REST OF THE DAY ***AND*** TOMORROW? THEY'RE PRETTY DAMN ***TALL!***

PFFT! THEY MAY BE TALLER, BUT BLOCKY HEELS LIKE ***THESE*** ARE A PIECE OF ***CAKE!***

JUST ***WAIT*** TILL WE WORK YOU UP INTO A PAIR OF ***STILETTOS!*** THEN YOU'LL ***REALLY*** HAVE REASON TO COMPLAIN! *GIGGLE!*

GREAT! SOMETHING TO LOOK ***FORWARD*** TO!

I'M **ALSO** GIVING YOU A **NEW** WAIST-CINCHER TO START WEARING TONIGHT!

DON'T TELL ME, LET ME GUESS... IT'S **TIGHTER** THAN THE OTHER ONE!

RIGHT THE **FIRST** TIME! AND THEY'LL **KEEP** GETTING TIGHTER **EACH DAY!**

I WANT YOU TO BE ABLE TO HANDLE A **22 INCH WAIST** BY THIS WEEKEND!

THAT'S WHY I'VE **ALSO** PUT SOME **MUSCLE-RELAXERS** INTO YOUR BAG TO HELP WHEN NEEDED!

THANKS... I GUESS!

AND ALTHOUGH YOU'RE ***ALREADY*** VERY GOOD AT ***MIMICKING*** A FEMALE VOICE, IT ***STILL*** NEEDS SOME ***WORK!***

I'M GOING TO SEND YOU SOME THINGS TO ***READ OUT LOUD*** WHEN YOU'RE HOME ALONE!

WHAT ***KIND*** OF THINGS?

OH, JUST VARIOUS ***SCRIPTS*** FROM MOVIES THAT'LL HELP YOU DEVELOP MORE ***FEMININE INFLECTIONS*** IN YOUR VOICE!

ONE **MORE** THING BEFORE WE'RE DOWN FOR THE DAY... THE **BODY HAIR** HAS **GOT** TO **GO!**

DO IT **BEFORE** I SEE YOU AGAIN! BECAUSE IF **I** SEE THOSE **HAIRY EXTREMITIES** AGAIN, **I'M** SCHEDULING **YOU** FOR A **FULL BODY WAXING!**

GOOD! NOW WHEN YOU GET HERE TOMORROW I WANT YOU **WEARING** THOSE SHOES, NOT **CARRYING** THEM IN YOUR BAG!

AND PLAN ON SPENDING THE **ENTIRE DAY** SPEAKING IN YOUR **FEMALE VOICE ONLY!** **GOT IT?**

YEAH, I **FIGURED** I'D HAVE TO DO THAT AT **SOME** POINT!

YIKES! I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT **TONIGHT**!

SIGH! **YES**, MA'AM!

A couple of days later...

FUCK! I WAS *HOPING* THAT DRIVER WOULDN'T *NOTICE* THAT I CHANGED INTO THESE *WEDGES* ON THE WAY OVER! BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS FROM THAT *SNICKER* HE GAVE ME THAT *HE DID!*

I WILL BE *SO* FUCKING *HAPPY* WHEN THIS WEEK IS *OVER* AND I'M NOT FORCED TO *MINCE AROUND* IN *PUBLIC* ANYMORE!

AT *LEAST* WHEN I DO IT AT THE PARTY THIS WEEKEND, *NO ONE* WILL THINK *TWICE* ABOUT IT 'CAUSE THEY'LL THINK I'M A *REAL* CHICK... *HOPEFULLY!*


THEY'D BETTER FALL FOR IT, CONSIDERING EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN PUTTING UP WITH THIS WEEK!
I SHAVED PRACTICALLY MY ENTIRE BODY... TWICE! AND IT STILL WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE DIVA!
WHY THE FUCK SHE DIDN'T TELL ME ABOUT DEPILATORIES IN THE FIRST PLACE IS BEYOND ME! SURE, THEY STING A BIT, BUT IT SURE AS FUCK BEATS ALL THE NICKS AND CUTS I WAS DEALING WITH BEFORE!
SLEEP WEAR
CENSORED

WELL, I'LL DO **WHATEVER** IT TAKES TO GET**THROUGH** THIS WEEK AND **FOOL** REX'S COWORKERS **AND** THAT **COUGAR** THAT'S AFTER HIM!

AND IF THAT MEANS ENDURING **HELL** AT THE HANDS OF **MADAME SATAN** UP THERE, THEN **SO BE IT!**

A few hours later, at the end of the day's session...

I *HAVE* TO SAY YOU'VE BEEN DOING *SURPRISINGLY* WELL THIS WEEK, DEAR! *MUCH* BETTER THAN I *INITIALLY* THOUGHT YOU'D DO!

HMPH! A *BACK-HANDED* COMPLIMENT IF I *EVER* HEARD ONE!

WELL, I'M PRETTY DARN *MOTIVATED* TO PULL THIS OFF THIS WEEKEND!

OH, I *KNOW* YOU ARE! WHICH IS WHY I'M *ACCELERATING* YOUR TRAINING!

ACCELERATING IT? IN *WHAT WAY?*

Lingerie

LET'S JUST SAY YOU ***WON'T*** BE EMBARRASSED AROUND THOSE ***UBER*** DRIVERS ANYMORE!

YOU... YOU ***KNOW*** ABOUT THAT?

OH, HONEY... ***LOLA*** KNOWS ***EVERYTHING***!


NOW...
HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO...

Several hours later...

HEY, DANIEL... I'M HOME! **SORRY** I'M SO **LATE**! IT WAS A **CRAZY** DAY!


ONE OF OUR BIGGEST, BUT MOST ANNOYING CLIENTS NEEDED SOME MAJOR HAND-HOLDING DURING A DEPOSITION TODAY AND I DREW THE SHORT STRAW!
HOW'D IT GO WITH YOU AT MISS LOLA'S TODAY?
UMMM... FINE!


I'M SORRY I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND YOU! WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I SAID IT WENT JUST FINE!


WOW! NO WONDER I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND YOU... YOU'RE USING THAT FEMALE VOICE AGAIN, AREN'T YOU? MAN, I CAN'T GET OVER HOW UNCANNY YOU SOUND!
UMMM... YEAH! LOLA WANTED ME TO START USING IT ALL THE TIME SO I COULD GET USED TO IT AND SOUND MORE NATURAL!
WELL, IT'S WORKING! BECAUSE YOU SOUND PERFECT!
THANKS! I HOPE ME USING IT ALL THE TIME WON'T THROW YOU OFF TOO MUCH!
NO PROBLEM! I'M SURE I'LL GET USED TO IT!
GOOD! BECAUSE THAT'S NOT ALL LOLA WANTED ME TO START DOING 24/7!


WHAT ELSE DOES SHE...
HOLY...!

OKAY, JUST HOW **RIDICULOUS** DO I LOOK? **PLEASE**... BE **TRUTHFUL!**

YOU **DON'T** LOOK RIDICULOUS **AT ALL!** YOU LOOK **JUST** LIKE A **GIRL!** A VERY **PRETTY** GIRL ACTUALLY!

THAT **LOLA** IS A **MIRACLE WORKER!**

YEAH, WELL... SHE'S ***NOT DONE*** YET! ***THIS*** IS ALL JUST THE ***PRE-GAME,*** SO TO SPEAK!

SHE WANTED ME TO ***LIVE*** THESE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS TOTALLY ***EN FEMME*** SO I COULD GET ***USED*** TO IT AND WORK OUT ALL THE KINKS ***BEFORE*** SATURDAY!

WELL IF THERE ***ARE*** ANY KINKS, ***I'M*** SURE AS HECK NOT SEEING THEM!

YEAH, **AMAZING** WHAT A LITTLE MAKEUP, PADDING AND A **CORSET** CAN DO, **RIGHT?**

WELL THEN I GUESS ALL THAT **TRAINING** I'VE BEEN PUTTING IN WITH LOLA IS **PAYING OFF** AFTER ALL! *GIGGLE!*

IT'S **MORE** THAN JUST HOW YOU **LOOK**, DANIEL! IT'S THE WAY YOU **WALK**.. THE WAY YOU **MOVE**... **EVERYTHING!**

I **KNOW** YOU'RE REALLY A **MAN**, BUT I'M HAVING A REALLY **DIFFICULT** TIME **REMEMBERING** THAT RIGHT NOW!

PAYING OFF IN **SPADES!** *CHUCKLE!*

I CAME **SO CLOSE** TO TELLING **LOLA** WHAT TO **DO** WITH HER **IDEA** WHEN SHE TOLD ME ABOUT IT! BUT I'M **GLAD** I **DIDN'T!**

NOW, **REX** GETS TO **SEE** HOW MUCH **WORK** I'M PUTTING IN TO SAVE **HIS** JOB! HELL, I'M ESSENTIALLY **SACRIFICING** MY **MANHOOD** FOR HIM... TEMPORARILY MAYBE, BUT **STILL!**

IF **EVERYTHING** I'M DOING **DOESN'T** PROVE TO HIM **ONCE AND FOR ALL** THAT I'M **WORTH** KEEPING AROUND, THEN **NOTHING** WILL!

WOW! I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE DANIEL IS PUTTING UP WITH ALL OF THIS! AND HOW CONVINCING HE IS AS A WOMAN!

HE MUST STILL THINK HE'S AT FAULT FOR THE MESS I'M IN, EVEN THOUGH I'VE INSISTED HE ISN'T!

SIGH! HE'S HAD SUCH A HARD LIFE THESE LAST FEW YEARS! I'VE GOT TO DO WHATEVER I CAN TO SHOW HIM THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WILL TRUST HIM AND FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT HE'S A TRULY RESPONSIBLE PERSON!