



CHAPTER 3 PART 1

THE HAUNTING OF
PALMER MANSION

FICTION

Rawly Rawls

The Haunting of Palmer Mansion Chapter 3 Part 1

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Written by RawlyRawls

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"I'm thinking of going to the library this weekend to see what else we can learn about this new house of ours." George looked around the table with a twinkle in his eye. He still had some dust in his messy blond hair even though they were sitting down to dinner. "Who's with me?"

"Sounds interesting, Dad." Brittney chewed her *Kung Pao* chicken takeout thoughtfully. "What do you want to find?"

Both Julie and Daniel kept their eyes on their respective plates of food. They'd been uncharacteristically quiet that evening.

George frowned at them. "Everything alright with you, Jules? Danny?"

They both looked up at him and quickly nodded.

"Yeah, I think the move –" Julie stopped talking when Daniel accidentally cut her off.

"... lots of tests at school, so ..." Daniel looked over at his mother, his cheeks flushed, and he looked back down at his plate. He pushed a cashew around with his fork.

"Well, you two sure are acting strange." George shook his head and looked at his daughter. "To answer your question, I'd like to know what happened to Frederick and Eloise in 1896. And maybe we could get a plan for the house, see what that locked room is all about. I haven't found any keys that might fit that lock. Has anybody else?"

Julie and Daniel shook their heads and looked off in different directions.

"No, Dad." Brittney chipped in.

"Okay, then." George scratched at his graying beard and thought about what mysteries lay in the Mansion's past. "Well, I'm going to the library on Saturday. Who else wants to do some digging with me?"

"I will." Brittney raised her hand.

"Maybe I'll use that time for a nap," Julie said. "I haven't been sleeping well."

"Homework." Daniel glanced at his father quickly.

"Well, it's just you and me then, Britt." George sighed.

Brittney happily nodded.





“You inspire me, Mrs. Julie Anderson.” Eloise looked up from a felt-upholstered wingback chair near the hearth in the main living room. Somewhere in the house a clock chimed two o’clock in the morning. The pale woman read by firelight, placing her finger in the leather-bound book to mark her place as she greeted her visitor. “I hadn’t read *First Love* in a long time. Very inspirational.” The pretty woman had her red hair up in a bun, and wore a white, frilly nightgown that went all the way to her ankles. The loose fabric almost concealed her pregnant belly. “And you brought the book back into my house. Well done.”

“How?” Julie looked around the room. She knew that the chimney needed a major cleaning before it would work again, but there was a roaring fire in the fireplace. On the walls, the glassy-eyed heads of a boar, a deer, and a moose stared blankly. The furniture was all wrong, too. The room was filled with ornate and shiny pieces with delicately turned edges. “How did I get here?” Julie suddenly perceived her nakedness. She found herself dressed only in a pair of white panties. She covered her breasts with both hands.

“You must have walked downstairs, silly.” Eloise scrunched up her nose in light-hearted mockery. “Please don’t cover yourself on my account, darling. I think your ruby-tipped globes are quite divine and I could alight my gaze upon them all night.” Eloise waited for Julie to drop her hands. When Julie persisted in her modesty, Eloise smiled, shrugged, and opened the book again. “Suit yourself.” She flipped a few pages and stopped. “You really are perfect for this house, sweet Julie. You brought me back to this book. I wouldn’t say *First Love* started it all, but it did give me ideas about men.”

“What are you talking about?” Julie shivered and walked past Eloise to stand by the fire. She felt no added warmth.

“Let me read you a passage.” Eloise’s green eyes fell to the pages in her lap. “Ah, here we are. This is from the teenage boy’s perspective. Remember, darling, he’s in love with an older lady.” Eloise read:

One day, I was sitting thus on the wall, gazing off into the distance and listening to the chiming of the bells ... when suddenly something ran over me – not a breeze exactly, not a shiver, but something resembling a breath, the consciousness of some one’s proximity.... I dropped my eyes. Below me, in a light grey gown, with a pink parasol on her shoulder, Zinaída was walking hastily along the road. She saw me, halted, and, pushing up the brim of her straw hat, raised her velvety eyes to mine.

“What are you doing there, on such a height?” – she asked me, with a strange sort of smile. – “There now,” – she went on, – “you are always declaring that you love me – jump down to me here on the road if you really do love me.”

Before the words were well out of Zinaída's mouth I had flown down, exactly as though some one had given me a push from behind. The wall was about two fathoms high. I landed on the ground with my feet, but the shock was so violent that I could not retain my balance; I fell, and lost consciousness for a moment. When I came to myself I felt, without opening my eyes, that Zinaída was by my side. – "My dear boy," – she was saying, as she bent over me – and tender anxiety was audible in her voice – "how couldst thou do that, how couldst thou obey?... I love thee ... rise."

Her breast was heaving beside me, her hands were touching my head, and suddenly – what were my sensations then! – her soft, fresh lips began to cover my whole face with kisses ... they touched my lips.... But at this point Zinaída probably divined from the expression of my face that I had already recovered consciousness, although I still did not open my eyes – and swiftly rising to her feet, she said: – "Come, get up, you rogue, you foolish fellow! Why do you lie there in the dust?" – I got up."

Eloise stopped reading and looked up. "There now, do you see?"

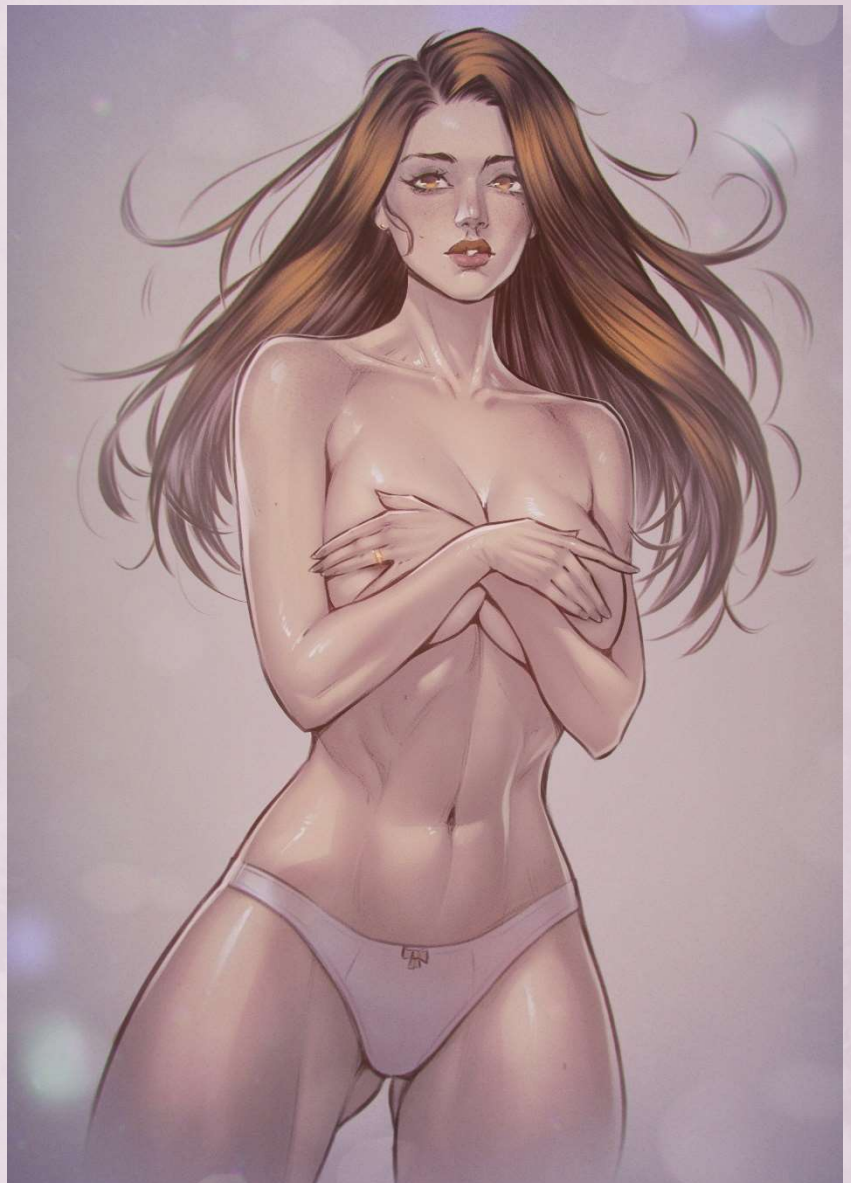
"No." Julie shook her head and took a step closer to the seated woman. It seemed the chill in the room emanated off Eloise's pale, freckled skin.

"We ask them to jump, darling, and they do it without a second thought." Eloise looked up at Julie with the most comforting crescent of a smile. "They melt under our kisses and long for nothing more than a woman's touch. A real woman, mind you. Not the girls seeking to entrap them in their skirts. I could give you and Daniel such pleasure. Everything you ever wanted and more."

"I'd never ..." Julie took a step back.

"But you've already launched yourself, darling. You need only to take hold of God's breath like one of those wonderous new dirigibles." Eloise stood and gracefully walked over to Julie. She reached up and moved Julie's arms down by her sides and regarded the woman's exposed breasts. "Like two teardrops. Your feminine form takes my breath away. Imagine what it will do to young Danny."

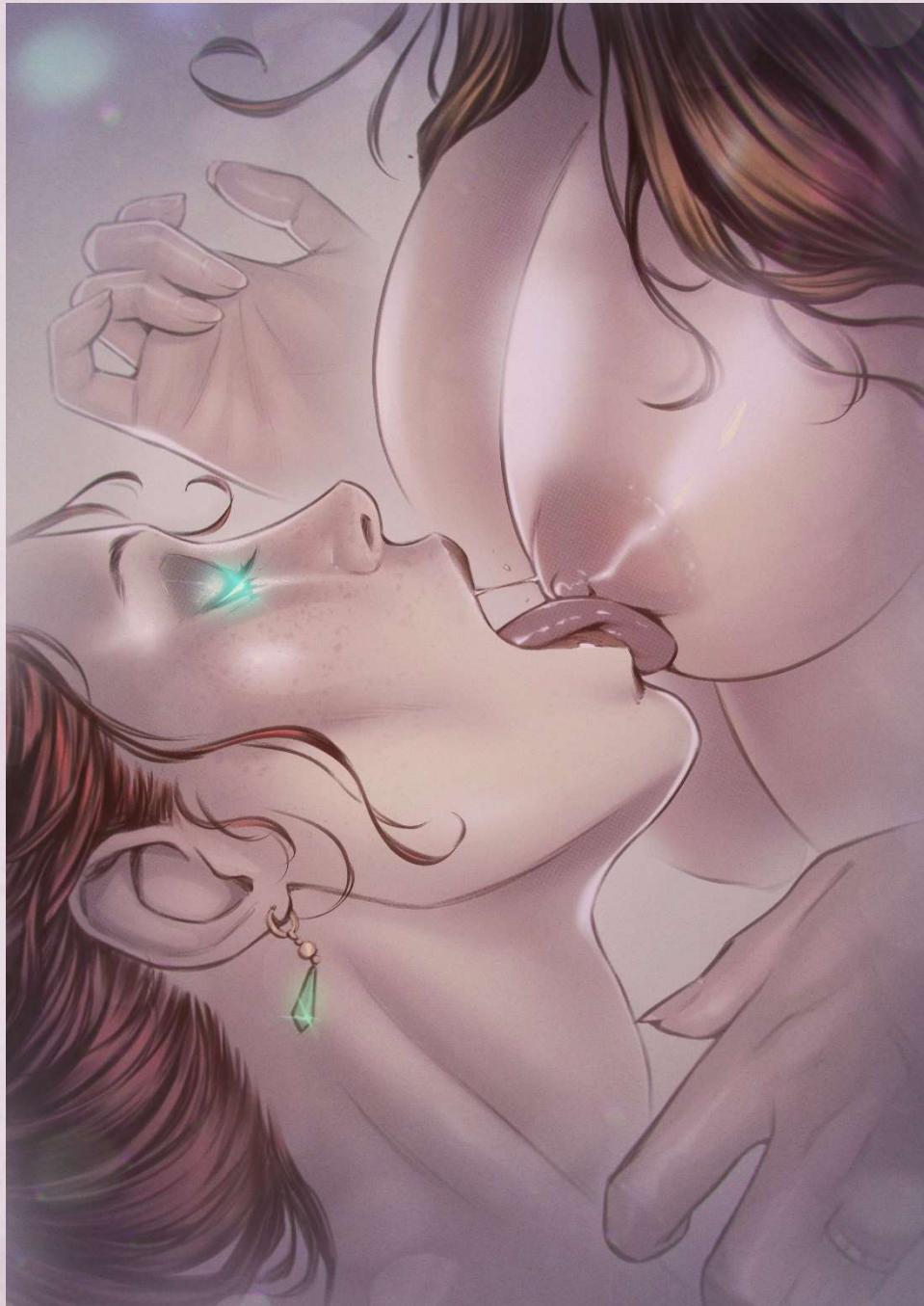
"He's only eighteen." Julie felt her nipples harden as Eloise reached up and rolled them between icy fingertips. "He's my son," Julie squeaked. The whole room swam. It seemed different furnishings occupied the same space and pushed up against each other, time rubbing on time.



“Details.” Eloise bent at her waist and gave Julie’s right nipple a lick with her frigid tongue. She thrilled as the housewife shuddered at her touch. She straightened and looked into Julie’s eyes. “We paid and received and the Devil took his due. All we need from you is your approbation, sweet Julie.”

The word *Devil* broke Julie from her stupor. “Peter 5:7. *Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith.*” Julie swatted away Eloise’s cold hands, covered up her boobs again, and ran from the living room. Less than a minute later, she fell into bed next to her beloved, snoring George. Her chest heaved and she pulled the covers over her head, calming herself some. She had simply gone too far with Daniel while helping him with his thing. Her conscience, using nightmares now, exerted its price. She wouldn’t do anything inappropriate with Daniel again and all should return to normal. Her breathing slowed. And when things did return to normal, the nightmares would surely fade away.

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On Wednesday, Brittney brought her new boyfriend home after school. Ted Haskins was an affable boy. He was also a senior at the twin's high school. Brittney wanted him to see the wonderous expanse of the house she now occupied.

She brought him up to her tower room and he was indeed dazzled. Especially by the view.

"You can see for miles. Do you have neighbors?" Ted held his hand over his eyes and looked through one of the north windows.

"Behind the trees to the south. They're pretty close actually, but we haven't met them yet." Brittney sat on her bed and patted the spot next to her. "Come here, Ted."

Ted turned and looked south. The trees weren't that far away, but he couldn't see the house hiding behind them. "What'd you have in mind?" He walked over and flopped on the bed.

The teenagers made out for a while.



Right in the middle of a rapturous moment as he wiggled his hand under Brittney's shirt, something tickled Ted's foot. Ted broke their kiss and looked down. He gave a started grunt and backed up against the headboard. A young man with freckles and red hair smiled down at him from the foot of the bed. Ted's tormentor wore baggy clothes with suspenders.

"What is it?" Brittney watched the color drain from her boyfriend's face.

"Who ..." Ted pointed to the foot of the bed, looked at Brittney, and then back. The intruder was gone.

"What is it, Ted?" Brittney looked down at the foot of the bed but could see nothing amiss.

"There was a boy here a second ago." Ted stood and straightened his shirt. "He messed with my foot."

"Daniel's helping my parents in the basement, I think." Brittney frowned up at him.

"Not your brother." Ted looked around the room but couldn't see anything but teenage clutter. "Look, I should probably get going. Can you walk me out? This house is ... really

convoluted." He hugged his broad chest with his arms.

“Sure.” Brittney got up, adjusted her bra, and led him downstairs. Once at the front door, she kissed him on the cheek. “Look, I’m sorry about whatever that was. We still on for Friday?”

“Sure.” Ted looked past her into the shadowy house. “Bye.” He turned and jogged down the footpath, got into his car, and sped away.

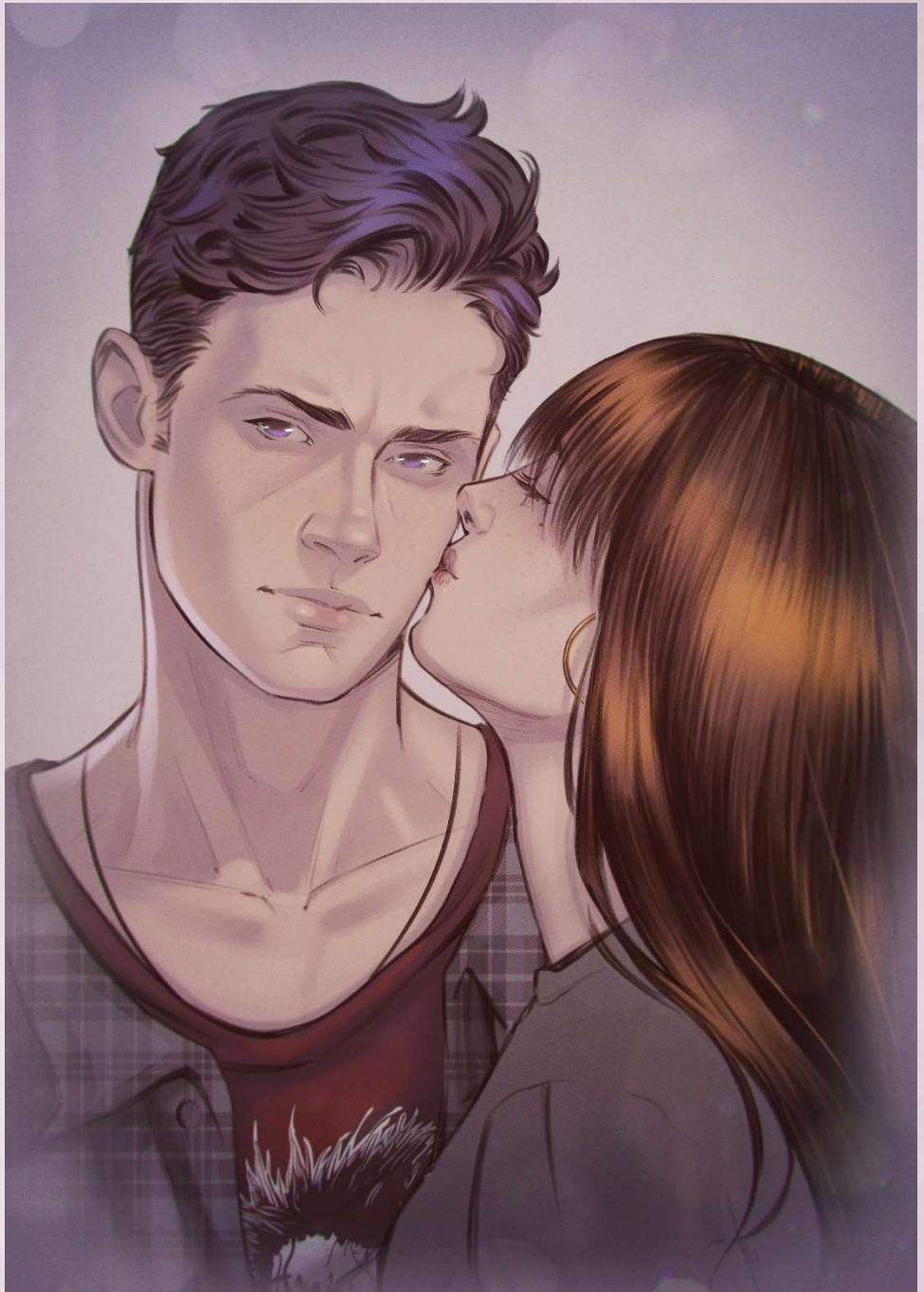
Brittney closed the massive oak door with loud thud. That wasn’t how she’d wanted her afternoon to go. She walked back upstairs to maybe listen to some music.

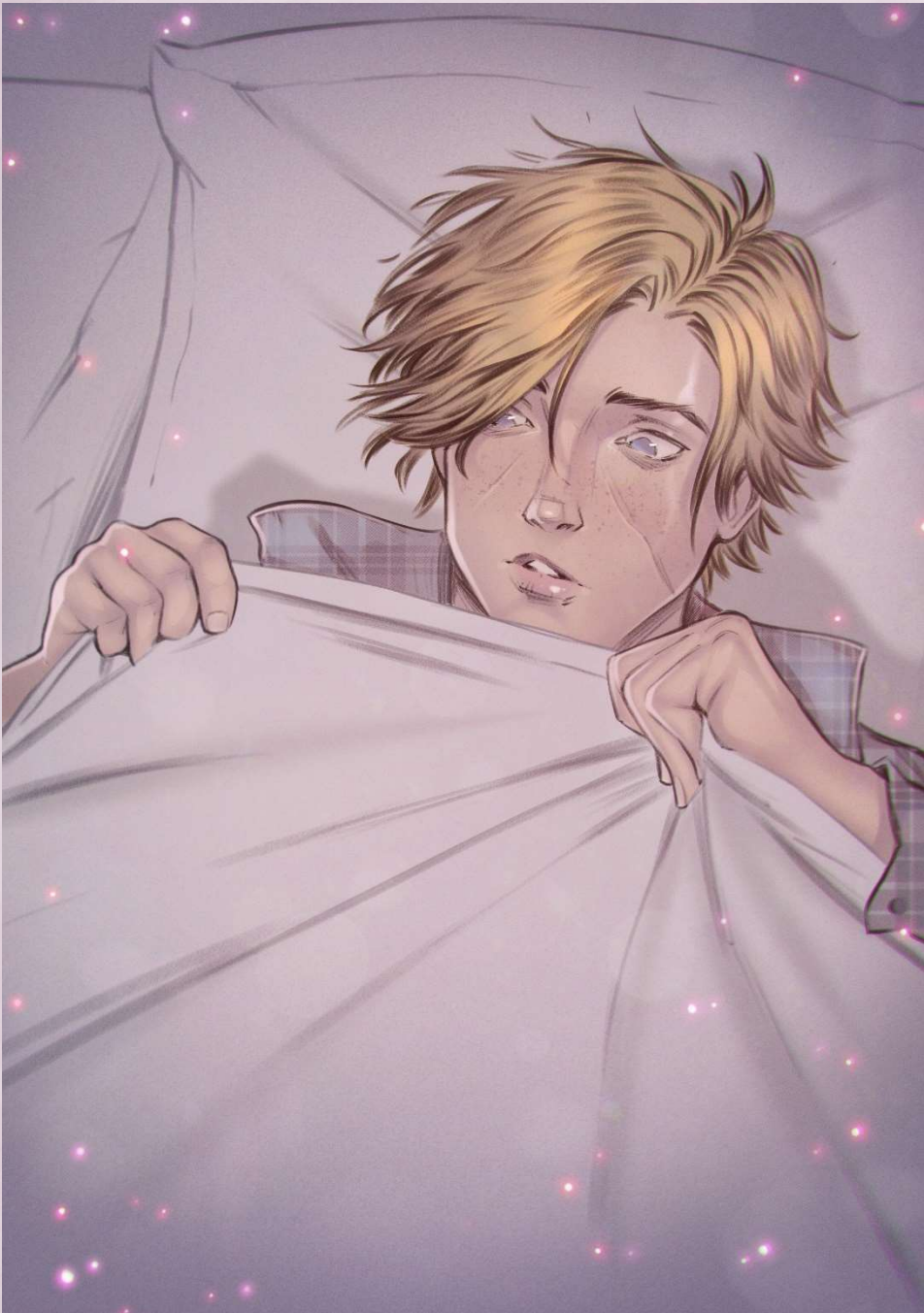
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In the middle of the night, Daniel woke with a start. Starlight filtered in through his open window from the moonless sky outside. What the heck, the window stood open again, letting in the cold night air. Why did it keep doing that? He knew he’d closed it this time. Daniel looked to see if his bedroom door was open too. It looked closed. Daniel didn’t think Eloise would be responsible for something so petty. Or mean. She was so sweet to Daniel.

The sound of a muffled smash carried into his room through his closed door. It was a noise like someone dropping china on the floor. And then he heard a man’s voice, also muffled by the door, but nearby.

“Who’s the father, Ellie?” The man said. He had a quiver in his voice. The sound of someone on the edge. “Your little friend sung to me. Sung like a pretty bird. I know that is not my child you carry.”





A pop sounded, like a firecracker, and Daniel's body jerked at the noise. He pulled his covers up around his chin and lay perfectly still.

"I will not countenance the buck's face, Ellie," the man said.

Daniel had read enough to know the man was saying he wouldn't allow his wife to cheat on him. To make him a cuckold.

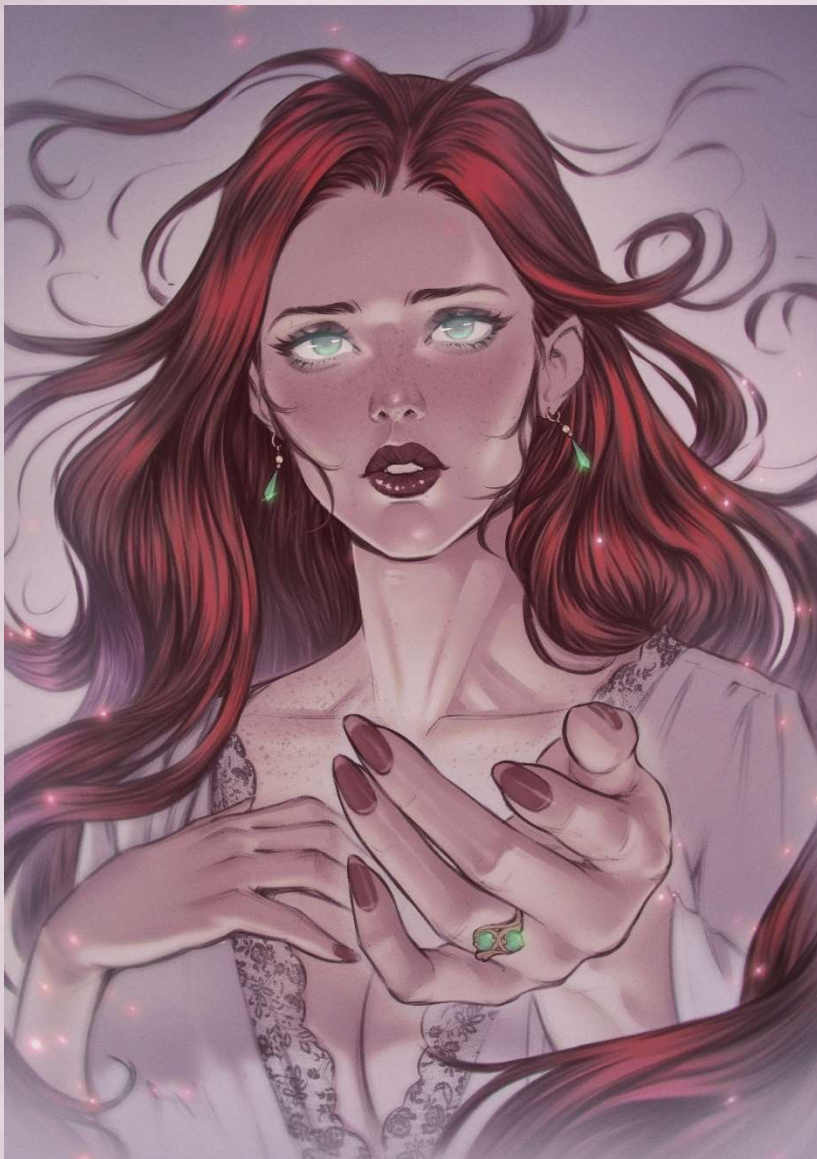
"Come on out, Tommy." The man's voice dripped menace. "Tell me where your mother hides." The voice was closer to Daniel's door now. Five more pops went off, accompanied by the sound of splintering wood.

Daniel held his breath. Was his door locked? He heard the tinkling of metal. He guessed that the man carried a revolver and he'd dropped the spent bullet casings on the floor to reload.

A sudden awareness spread through Daniel's nerves. There was someone else in the bedroom with him. All his muscles contracted when a white shape sped toward him out of the shadows by the dead fireplace. He gave a long sigh when he saw Eloise's kind face.

Her presence was somewhat less comforting when he saw her green eyes were wide with fright. She wore a long white nightgown that covered her ankles.

"Come now, young one," Eloise whispered. She offered her left hand to Daniel and the binary diamonds on her ring shimmered in the starlight. She looked over her shoulder at the door and then back to Daniel. "We mustn't let him find us here. He suspects our congress."



Wordless, Daniel took her hand. He'd forgotten how cold she was, her icy grip firm. He allowed her to pull him out of bed. The smooth floorboards beneath his bare feet were almost as cool as the woman's hand. Thank goodness for the warmth of his flannel pajamas.

"Storm's coming, Ellie," the man said. He might have been right outside the bedroom door. There was another clattering crash and two more pops. "When it arrives, even the Devil won't save you."

"Hurry." Eloise pulled Daniel directly toward the fireplace with some urgency.

As they approached, Daniel realized that the hearth was somehow sideways and a yawning black gap looked out at him from either side. "What?" He let her lead him into the darkness. They paused on the other side of the fireplace, Eloise moved her free hand against the wall, and with a quiet grinding the hearth swung back and closed them off from the bedroom.

"I had the builders install this hidden stairway without Frederick's knowledge." Eloise's voice held a muted tone in the enclosed space. "Even early in our marriage, he was a man of moods oftentimes deplorable.

And, of course, the workmen were eager to please the lady of the house." Her frozen hand held firmly to Daniel's warm one. "Careful now, there's a step here. Good. And now here." She reached up and gripped his elbow with her free hand as she guided him down the winding stairs in the black. "Frederick still knows nothing of this passage."

"Thank God for that." Daniel took step after cautious step down and down.

"Yes." There was a smile in Eloise's voice. "Or someone."

"Where are we going?" Daniel opened his eyes as wide as he could but could see only blackness.

"The basement, dearie." Eloise steadied Daniel as he almost lost his balance. "And here we are, no more of those dreadful stairs, you brave boy." There was the sound of a flipped switch and then slow grinding. The basement hearth turned sideways and Eloise pulled Daniel through.

The living room down in the basement was the largest room in the house. There was a treadmill left by the previous owners in one corner and a billiard table that also came with the house nearby. The Andersons had put a couch down here and had perched their television on a cardboard box near the fireplace. The only light in the room came from a nightlight George had plugged in near the stairs.

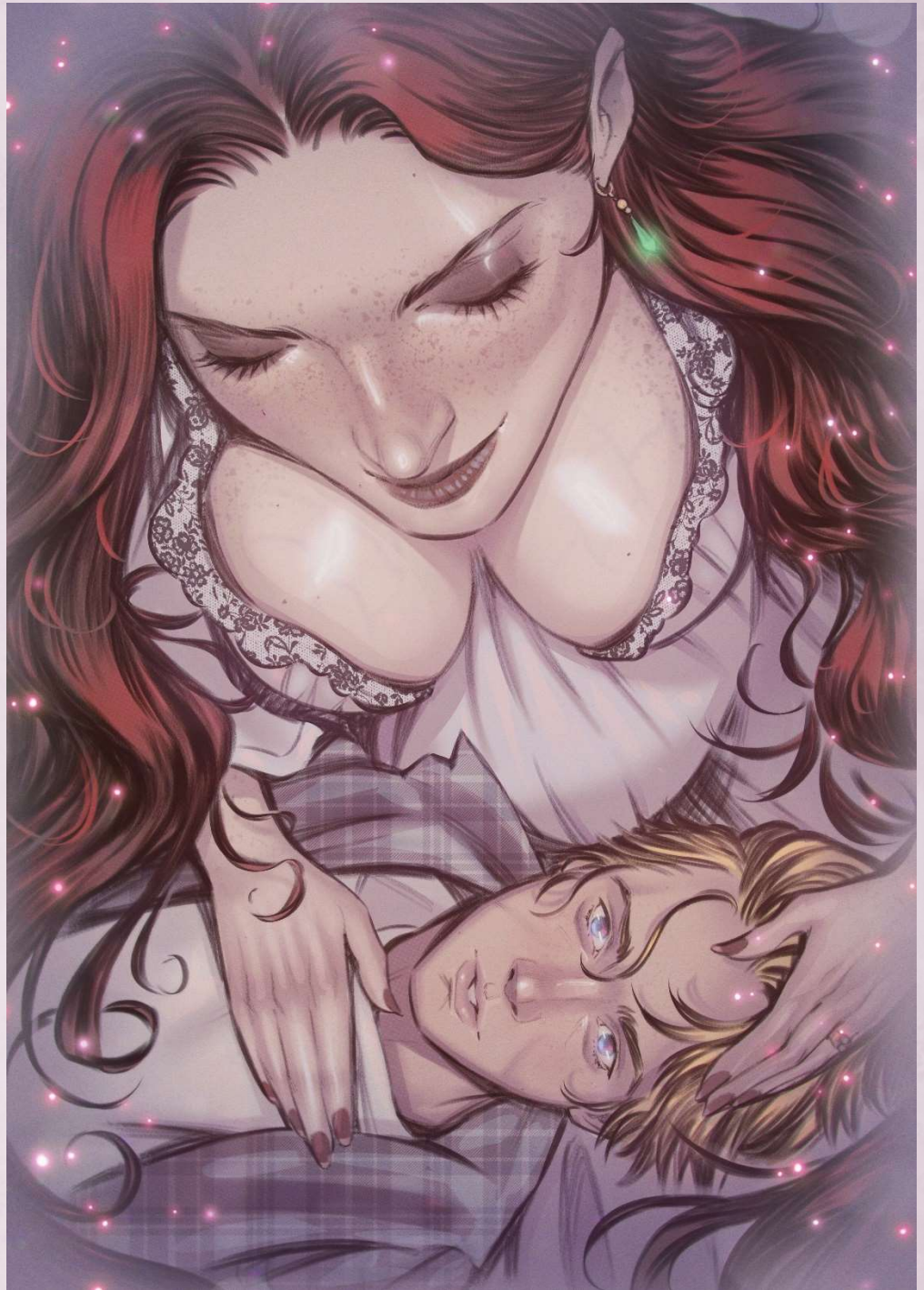
"I can't believe it." Daniel looked around as the fireplace swiveled closed behind them. "A secret staircase." He let the pregnant woman pull him over to the couch. She sat down and had him lie next to her, his head in her lap. The chill seeped out of her as she played with Daniel's hair, but he didn't mind.

"We'll be safe down here, darling. He never looks for us down here." Eloise paused and let the quiet around them bolster her words. "You must have had such a fright. I know just the thing to sooth you." She shrugged her arms out of her nightgown and lowered the garment past her breasts. Her nipples stood out prominent and dark on her alabaster breasts. She slid her hips down to the edge of the couch and propped Daniel's head on her bulging belly. "There now, drink and calm yourself."

"I don't understand." The icy tips of her fingers pressed against his cheek and turned his mouth toward her breast. With her other hand, she squeezed her right tit and plopped the nipple between his lips. Then Daniel understood. The sweetest, most delicious tangy flavor filled his mouth and he gulped it down. The temperature was the same as milk taken straight from the fridge. All his muscles relaxed and Daniel gave into the most wonderful drink he'd ever tasted.

"There now. That's a good boy." Eloise looked down at him with a soft smile. "Everything's better now. I'll take care of you."

"Mmmmmmmmm," Daniel said.



"I just have a favor to ask, Danny." She stroked his cheek softly as he drank. "If I am to maintain my visits, you'll need to have your mother take another step. She is most resistant to me, you see."

"Mmmmmmm?" Daniel continued gulping that sweet, cold milk.

"Have her take care of you again. But this time, darling, I'd like her to use her breasts to satisfy your cravings." Eloise purred the words. "Understand? Those ruby-tipped globes are wasted on that father of yours. Clear enough?"

Daniel nodded and sucked. Eloise wanted him to coax a titjob out of his mom. There was some aversion on Daniel's part to the idea, but he would do anything to keep Eloise around. And one little titjob wouldn't hurt anyone. He'd just have to find a way to convince his sweet mother. Daniel drifted off to sleep at Eloise's breast.



Birds sung and cool morning light fell over Daniel's bed. He woke with a start and sat up in bed. He knew the night's events had been no dream. He needed to find the courage to do as Eloise asked. Even if it took some time, he'd find a way.

