“Damn.”

“Damn, damn, damn.”

“Damn, damn, damn, mother-fucker, damn, bitch, cunt, son-of-a-bitch, damn, fucking hell a-hole!”

Victoria Vallencourt was not happy. And like most times when she was not happy, she cursed like a construction worker who had just broken her nose. She had just had what had to be one of the worst days of her life, and it was all because of Abbie Delaney.

Whatever she had done to Abbie in some past life to anger her and earn that bitch’s eternal scorn and wrath- and with it the rest of her peers- Victoria hadn’t known; but for some reason she was always the target of Abbie’s soul crushing verbal abuse. All through middle school, high school and well into what was her Senior Year, Abbie had kicked Victoria around like the mean girl in the first half of a John Hughes movie; not that Abbie would get the reference.

Maybe that was why Abbie Delaney had spent the last eight odd years of their lives doing everything that could be done to make Victoria a social leper. Victoria’s tastes might be described as “eclectic”, or “nostalgic.” When she was a little girl, adults would refer to her as “an old soul”. Victoria had more knowledge of the culture of her parents and grandparents then she did people her own age.

So while her classmates had been fawning over Justin Bieber (pre-voice change no less), Middle-school Victoria had been rocking with the Beatles and the Ramones. Today, she couldn’t begin to tell you one song by The Weekend, but could tell you all about “Weekend at Bernie’s”. But thanks to Abbie Delaney, Victoria never really got to tell anybody about “Weekend at Bernie’s”, or any other great old movie from before she was born. She was the freak; the weirdo; the loser; “Icky-Vicky”.

“Nobody but losers care about that old junk, Icky Vicky,” Abbie Delaney had shouted over lunch room tables and across libraries and study halls countless times.

Perhaps it was because Victoria wasn’t girly enough to Abbie’s liking, (not that Victoria had ever sought Abbie’s approval on anything). Abbie had always been a supremely girly girl: She was always wearing make-up, was almost always in some kind of pink, and other than gym, Victoria could never remember seeing Abbie in shorts or pants. If it hadn’t violated the school dress code in some way, Vicky was sure that Abbie would always be wearing heels. To compensate, Abbie had worn enough different pairs of sandals, flats, boots, and sneakers to likely warrant their own wing of her house.

Oh, yes, that's right. Abbie Delaney was not only a bully, but she was a rich little Mommy and Daddy's girl. Victoria once estimated that if Abbie gave away all but one or two pairs of shoes, an entire village in some remote part of the third world could stop walking around barefoot.

Meanwhile, Victoria had all but refused to wear anything other than t-shirts, jeans and sneakers since she was old enough to dress herself. Even in her baby pictures, she looked unhappy in a dress. Her mother had coerced her a handful of times since then for special occasions like weddings and such, but there had always been a huge drama-of-a-fight prefacing the decision.

Abbie had managed to be the captain of the cheerleading squad since she was a sophomore and wore her hair back in a tight ponytail most days. While it wasn't "boyish", Vicky liked keeping her auburn hair short and had been considering auditioning for the marching band's drumline till a snide comment from Abbie had her first shaking with rage, then fighting back tears, then running for the bathroom, then cursing up a storm way after the fact.

"Did you hear, guys? Icky Vicky is playing drums so that she can finally bang something!"

Who knew? Like a certain green furry character that tried to steal Christmas, maybe Abbie's socks were too tight or her head wasn't screwed on quite right. Victoria, however, suspected it was just because Abbie Delaney was a terrible person and a total bitch who got her jollies by making others feel bad and Victoria was just Abbie's victim of choice.

The latest assault came this morning in homeroom.

"Attention students," the morning announcements had droned over the speaker. "As class president, I am proud to announce the candidates for this year's Senior Prom Queen. They are Abigail 'Abbie' Delaney, Cindy Northstrom, and Megan "Meggie" Moore. Thank you, and with the lunch- "

There was some muttering that could barely be heard and then…

"Oh, I almost forgot. Due to popular demand, we have a fourth nominee for homecoming queen. Victoria 'Icky Vicky' Vallencourt. You can throw your vote away, or throw her away, but not both."

The laughter in homeroom had started out as uncomfortable and quiet; everyone was trying to hold it in. Then one unstifled chuckle became a bubbling chorus of laughter, and then the laughter ratcheted it up to full on guffawing.

The teacher didn't even bother to try to stop the mockery. He just hid behind his newspaper, his shoulders shaking as he chuckled along while pretending to be decent. Then Abbie Delaney stood up, her too perfect blonde hair, framing her too perfect stuck up face, in her prissy pink

blouse and black skirt that didn't even reach her knee high black boots, and shouted "Guys! Stop it! Stop it! This is wrong!"

Immediately everyone stopped. The queen bee had demanded it, and the queen always got what she wanted from her workers and drones.

"There's been an awful mistake," Abbie had proclaimed. She then looked Victoria in the eye, and her lips pouted, her eyes filled with sincerity. "Vicky, honey, I am sooooo sorry, sweetie. That was wrong of them to do that on the morning announcements. A terrible mistake was made." Then, before even a smidgen of hope could well up inside Victoria, Abbie Delaney had added, "You were supposed to be nominated for Prom KING!"

Victoria had ran to the bathroom, on the verge of crying her eyes out as her homeroom behind her became a cackle of hyenas. There, her tears had joined the rest of the bodily excrement down the drains. She missed the rest of homeroom and most of second period, crying, until the tears wouldn't come anymore. Victoria didn't know if it was possible to become dehydrated through the shedding of tears, but if it was, Victoria felt she had come close. She had wanted to be strong, and vicious, and powerful, and cutthroat so that she could take Abbie Delaney down a few notches, or at least get her to back off.

But in the heat of the moment, every time, Victoria was useless. There was no doubt in her mind that she'd have thought of the perfect way to cut Abbie Delaney down to size while in the shower tonight, but witty comebacks had a half-life of moments before they lost their potency and relevancy. It was quirky and charming in a Wes Anderson film for the hero to go up to the antagonist and bark out "Hey, say that line again!" but that would only earn Victoria more mockery here in the real world. Granted, it didn't really work in the movies either, but…well actually, there was no but.

Abbie Delaney had won yet another round in a fight that Abbie had picked and which Victoria felt constantly unprepared for and off guard. How could it be, Victoria wondered, that she was eighteen years old- a legal adult; old enough to vote, smoke, join the military, get married, have sex, watch and star in a porno- but Abbie Delaney still had the power to make her feel so small and helpless? How could she be within the top 10 GPAs in her school, and still feel so stupid, all because of one other girl who would just not leave her be?

So, Victoria did what she could to make it through the day; not grinning, but bearing the snickers behind her back and whispers of "Queen Victoria the Worst," till she could finally take the long walk home, cursing the agony away.

"Tampon tea-bagging, cunt muffin with a side of twat-waffles!" Victoria muttered under her breath as she power-walked down the sidewalk.

Why was her life like this? Was she destined to be spat upon all her life, or was this just a nasty phase; something she'd look back on and laugh about, decades from now? Was Abbie Delaney constantly compensating and had some secret weakness that her constant unwarranted assaults hid? Was Victoria an unreliable narrator in her own personal fable? Was she unknowingly offensive on some unseen level that she could not detect, and that's why Abbie and the sheep that flocked to her tormented Victoria so?

Perhaps, Victoria conceded to herself, but not likely. She made good grades, and despite her current wallowing in self-pity, she rationally knew that she was not as alone as she felt right now. She did have some friends; or at least people who would eat lunch with her and not join in with Abbie's latest barbs. There was Melissa, and Candy, and Lisa, and they were all a little bit like her: A little "off", not the most popular girls, and perhaps, like her, possessing more than a little hint of primal rage bubbling below the surface, but Victoria didn't really pretend they were particularly close. Merely each other's ports in the storm that was the public education system.

And, Victoria made a note to herself, whether it be because of her better nature or her lack of grace under fire, she was a hell of a lot nicer than any of Abbie and her ilk. Sadly, despite several generations of teen movies discouraging the trend, the "mean girl is popular" trope was very much a reality. Just once, if only once, though, Victoria wished that she could have a laugh at Abbie's expense. It wouldn't even need to be the last laugh, just any laugh at all.

"Ice cream," Victoria muttered to herself. "I need ice cream." She was working herself into a frenzy. She couldn't go home in such a bad mood or her mom would notice it, and sparks would fly. Her mother had something of a short fuse, and over the last half-a-decade had conditioned herself to interpret any of Victoria's non-placid emotions as mood swings at best and defiance at worst. Furthermore, Mrs. Vallencourt had a flair for the extreme and the dramatic.

When she was eight, Victoria had been chosen to be the flower-girl in her uncle's third wedding, and the capricious second grader had managed to smuggle in jeans underneath the billowing flower girl dress in lieu of the more "tasteful" and "appropriate" leggings. Never mind that in Victoria's book no one over the age of three should wear leggings and that literally no one else had either noticed or cared; Mom had been furious.

Not only had that earned her a severe tongue lashing at her mom's hands, but also repercussions that somehow still seemed to echo throughout the years. A full eight years later when Victoria was invited to be in the bridal party of her uncle's fourth wedding, Victoria awoke the morning of to find that her mother had sewn the legs shut on every pair of pants and shorts that Vicky owned, so she would have no choice but to wear the ugly dress and nothing but. Thank goodness there were no leggings that time, at least.

Vicky turned the corner and went off route to her home, to stop by the local ice cream shop. She needed to calm down, and chill, or a bad day would turn into a worse night. A sweet treat

to herself would produce some much needed positive endorphins, and Hanselmann's was less than a block away. She calculated that cup of chocolate chip cookie dough ought to do the trick.

But as she approached where she knew Hanselmann's to be, she was instead greeted with a new sight. It was still an ice cream shop. Victoria could still see the freezers filled with buckets of ice cream through the large store-front window. But where "Hanselmann's Old Fashioned Ice Cream Parlour" had been lovingly painted onto the storefront window, the glass was barren.

Instead, a sandwich board had been placed by the door, and in big hastily scribbled letters read the words: "Professor Bumble's (Very Humble) Ice Cream Shop." Hanselmann's had been bought out? Not the most surprising thing. Small businesses went out of business or got bought out by a corporate franchise often enough, but had that happened, Victoria would have expected to see a Baskin Robbins or a Ben and Jerry's; not another small-time ice cream store.

What's more, not much seemed to have changed in this remarkably sudden transition, (hadn't she been by here just the other day?). Same old timey white and red décor color scheme on the walls, same fake potted plants in the corner; even the same hokey mannequin dressed as a 1950's soda jerk holding a plastic ice-cream cone. The neon sign still flashed "O-P-E-N", one letter at a time. Maybe old man Hanselmann had died? Maybe he had retired and just hadn't moved out all of his stuff yet? There was only one way to find out.

The same familiar bell above the door chimed with a "ding-a-ling" as Victoria walked in. The steady hum of the freezers buzzed in her ears in tune with the fluorescent lights. Victoria scanned the floor: Chairs. Tables. Service counter. Cash register. Topping bar. Everything was still here but the place seemed-

"Empty," Victoria said aloud. Her words seemed to echo back. "Hello?" she called out. "Hellooooo?"

Gingerly, she crept towards the cash register. There was a storage area in the back that could be glimpsed from the counter, she remembered. Maybe someone was there.

Victoria leaned over the counter and called out, "Is there anybody-?"

"HERE?!" a voice boomed, nowhere and everywhere at once.

Like a manic jack-in-the-box, someone popped up from behind the counter. Victoria gasped and jumped back. Standing behind the counter, was perhaps one of the most peculiar people she had even seen.

The old man was eighty if he was a day, with a slender, almost gangly frame that in the right light could be described as cartoonish, but in the wrong light could be thought of as skeletal.

His eyes were a piercing blue color, the same color as the noonday sky on a cloudless day, and laugh lines wrinkled his face.

From underneath a black top hat, shocks of snow-white hair shot out at disorganized and non-uniform angles. His equally white goatee ended in a sharp point a few inches above the collar of his red and yellow checkered shirt covered by his red and black polka dotted vest. His mustache curled upward in a way that made it seem as if it too, were smiling, along with its owner. The strange codger's toothy grin was so white, that his teeth were either bleached or actually dentures.

Victoria had never been to a circus in person, but had seen enough cartoons, pictures, and movies so that "circus" is immediately what popped open to mind. He looked like something of a cross between a Depression-era hobo clown and a circus ring master.

"Welcome, dear customer-" the old man beamed and bellowed with all the manic energy of a carnival barker, "to Professor Bumble's Very Humble Ice Cream Shop aaaaaand," he took a deep breath and then finished, "MAAAAAAAAAAAGIC EMPORIUM!" With remarkable agility he placed his hands on the counter and hopped over, the manic grin never leaving his face. Victoria noticed the purple and black stripes on his pants and the white wingtips on his shoes before she felt the need to take a step back. The stranger, oblivious to all of this, continued to walk forward.

"I, dear customer, am the aforementioned Professor Bumble, proprietor of this newly acquired establishment and purveyor of the finest chimerical cameos, elysian elixirs, and arcane artifacts available in this modern day and age as well as a healthy stock of illusionary devices and techniques," he paused. "I also sell ice cream." He spoke quickly with a clipped, not quite British accent, like maybe it was faked or otherwise muddled.

"Now, since you happen to be my very first customer in this region, allow me the honor of offering to you a free sample spell or other novelty item guaranteed to amuse. Perhaps some fake vomit?" The old bugger placed his palms together and brought his hands to his face in a sort of expectant, almost praying gesture, so that his index fingers were right below his nose. His eyes stared wide and full of anticipation at Victoria.

"I-I-I," Victoria stammered, unconsciously leaning back, "I just wanted some ice cream."

The light went out of the elderly gentleman's eyes as his lids drooped. His shoulders drooped and his arms dangled like a marionette's by his sides. He stepped back. "Oh," he said, and then let out a weary sigh.

"Very well," Professor Bumble grumbled. "Free ice cream it is. Take it from the mannequin on your way out." He gestured to an old soda jerk mannequin about 10 steps away from the store entrance. Victoria watched as the so-called Professor turned on his heel and dejectedly trudged

back behind the counter, this time merely walking around to the cash register instead of hopping over the counter.

Victoria, for her part, shuffled along the wall's edge toward the door, not daring to take her eyes off of this crazy old codger. People who acted this way outside of a B-Movie or cartoon had the tendency to be extremely unpredictable. For all Victoria knew, he might be readying himself to charge at her with an ice cream scoop and go for her eyes. "Eyes-Scream! Get it?!" she could just imagine him screaming.

It wasn't until she almost bumped into the aforementioned mannequin that she stopped and saw what it was holding. In place of a plastic chocolate ice cream cone straight out of some kitchen play set, was a waffle cone with not one, but two scoops of fresh chocolate chip cookie dough ice-cream resting in its hand. Victoria could still feel the chill coming from it.

Like an archeologist reaching for an ancient golden idol in a forbidden temple, readying herself for a sudden death trap, Victoria gingerly slid the cone up and out of the oversized Ken doll's grasp. She examined it for a minute, noticing that in her hand the ice cream was already beginning to melt, and tentatively took a bite.

"Hory shht," she slurred as she chewed the delicious ice cream, bits of chocolate chip and cookie dough dancing on her tongue and lodging themselves between her teeth. It was good. Better than anything she had bought when the place was Hanselmann's. And best of all, it had literally seemed to come out of nowhere.

"Excuse me," Victoria called out as she hurried back to the cash register. "How did you do that?"

"Magic," Professor Bumble sighed.

"You do magic?!"

The codger's jaw dropped in incredulous disbelief as he threw his hands up to the ceiling. He looked around the room as if there were an imaginary audience watching the exchange.

"Didn't? Didn't I-? Didn't I…?" He stuttered in stammered as if there was something he just couldn't quite grasp. There was a "they just don't get it" frustration in his voice. "Didn't I already say that? Weren't you listening, dear girl?" He began pacing over to the buckets of ice cream and back to the cash register.

"I'm fairly certain I was quite clear," he rambled. "Very clear. Spelled it out for you so there'd be no doubt. I'm positive that I enunciated properly when I mentioned that this was an ice cream shop and-," he held up his hands and wiggled his fingers in mock enthusiasm "maaaaaaagic emporium."

“Did I talk too fast, dear girl? Are people in this part of the world in this time just not as intelligent as I have made myself accustomed to? Do I need smaller words?” Professor Bumble asked.

“Honestly?” Victoria answered, “I wasn’t really listening. You came on a little strong and got up in my personal space. I was so focused on you that I didn’t pay attention to what you were saying. Pretty good trick with the ice cream cone, though. Even got my favorite flavor.”

“Oh?” the old man seemed to consider for a moment. “Then, my apologies to you, my dear. I’ve been terribly rude to you. Allow me to make a proper introduction instead of some rehearsed sales pitch.” He walked back around from the counter and removed his hat, showing equally unkempt shocks of snow-white hair, and bowed.

“Professor Bumble, Magician Extraordinaire and part-time small business owner. At your service.” He offered his hand to Victoria.

“Victoria Vallencourt,” Victoria took the funny fellow’s hand and shook it, “High School Senior.”

“Victoria, eh?” Professor Bumble smiled amusedly. “Charming name. I’ve known several Victoria’s in my time, and each of them has been a joy to know in some form or another. One of them was a queen.” Victoria shuddered a little bit when she heard the word “queen”, still not over this morning.

“So,” Victoria sought to change the subject, “what happened to Mr. Hanselmann?”

“I bought him out,” the Professor said matter-of-factly. “I’d wager the old boy is enjoying his retirement at long last on some exotic island or another. Or at least, he could with all the money I paid him.”

“Why’d you buy him out?” Victoria queried.

“Oh, it’s all part of my business plan,” Professor Bumble answered. “They come for the ice cream, but they stay for the magic. It worked on you didn’t it?”

Victoria snorted air through her nose. “Um…I’m not planning on staying for the magic, sir. I think I’ll just finish my ice cream and leave.”

“Well,” Professor Bumble placed the top hat back on his head and bobbled it a little from side to side, “if you’re not going to leave before you’ve finished your ice cream, perhaps you should have more ice cream.” He winked at Victoria. Victoria looked over to the ice cream cone in her hand and now counted three completely intact scoops of chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream.

“WHOOOAH!” Victoria exclaimed in surprise. “Dang, sir! You’re good! How’d the hell did you do that?”

Professor Bumble shrugged as if what he did were the most natural thing in the world. “I’m a magician, dear girl. I magish.”

“That’s some grade-A David Copperfield bullshit right there!” Victoria was impressed. She turned around surveying the rest of the shop. There had to be some sort of trained acrobatic monkey or something stealthy reloading her cone while her attention was focused elsewhere. But there was no trace of such a monkey.

“David Copperfield is an illusionist, dear Victoria,” Professor Bumble corrected. “I’m a magician. There’s a subtle difference. The primary one being that my magic uuuuuh-“, he made a circular gesture with his right hand and lightly snapped his fingers as if searching for the right word, “works,” he finished.

Victoria cocked an eyebrow as she took another bite of ice cream. She swallowed before saying “So you’re saying your magic is real? You’re like a wizard, or something?”

“I already told you,” the old humbug repeated himself, “I’m a magician. I magish. Wizards. Well I won’t say what they do in front of mixed company, but I’m sure you can use your imagination.”

Victoria got the joke and politely laughed while still eating the ice cream, letting the man’s claims and the evidence he was providing to back it up really sink in.

“Oh really?” Victoria remarked. “Because with your getup, I was getting more of a circus vibe than a Vegas theme, and definitely not a real magic vibe. I would’ve expected robes and maybe a pointier hat or something.”

“It’s complicated,” the Professor responded, “and not really important enough to explain to all of my customers.”

“Still, you’re really good.”

“Thank you.”

“The ice-cream is really good too.”

“I know.”

“The getup works for you, though. Are you like a retired clown or something?”

The lights suddenly went dark, and the humming of the freezers died. The afternoon sun outside seemed to dim, even though to Victoria's recollection there hadn't been a cloud in the sky for it to hide behind.

The old man's skin seemed taught and discolored in the darkness, like a corpse. And even though she couldn't hear the freezers any longer, a kind of cold filled the room. He shambled a step closer to her and Victoria could tell that the cold was coming from him. He looked her in the eye, his own pupil's now seeming bloodshot red instead of sky blue.

"Clowns are the most unworthy practitioners of magic, utilizing the lowest form of prestidigitation known to man. No self-respecting magician would ever truck with that lot or stand to be associated with them. I. Am. Not. A. Clown. Understand?"

Wide eyed, Victoria nodded dumbly. The living corpse in front of her took a step back and the lights came on and some semblance of normalcy rushed like air into a vacuum. Standing there in front of her was the same odd old man that had only moments ago been something more akin to the walking dead.

"Umm…should I…go?" Victoria asked aloud, her feet already backing her out.

"What?! No! Nononononono!" Professor Bumble said. "Of course not!"

"Iiiiii'm gonna go." Victoria dumped the ice cream on the floor and turned to leave.

"Wait!" Professor Bumble called out. "Please don't go. I have so much magic to sell, and I know you know it's the real thing now!"

"That's nice," Victoria said nervously looking over her shoulder to make sure this thing disguised as a man wasn't walking after her.

"I can give you power."

"No thanks."

"The love of your life!"

"Nope!" she called back.

"I can give you revenge on that girl you don't like!" he called out desperately.

Victoria stopped and turned back around to face the magician. "How did you-?"

“You’re an eighteen year old girl, out for ice cream, alone, on a Thursday afternoon, and any idiot with a modicum of common sense or empathy can see by your eyes that you’ve been crying or trying not to cry most of the day.”

“Is it that obvious?” Victoria asked.

“Only to me, dear girl.” The old man answered. “Now, shall we journey into the back and see what non-frozen-dairy-treat-related services I can provide you?”

Victoria took a breath. Maybe this was meant to happen. “Okay,” she finally said, walking back towards the store’s owner. Out of the corner of her eye, she noticed that the ice cream cone she’d tossed down to the floor had vanished.

Professor Bumble gestured to the back storage room of the ice cream shop and led her into the back room. As soon as she crossed the threshold of the doorway her ears popped like she had experienced a sudden change in altitude or something. She instinctively yawned and tried to dig her finger into her ear to try and clear it out.

“Sorry, forgot to warn you about that.” She heard Professor Bumble behind her.

While Victoria had never actually been in the back room of what was once Hanselmann’s Old Fashioned Ice Cream Parlour, she was more than certain that it hadn’t looked like this before. The whole room seemed at least as large as the ice cream store proper, but it had a brown and dusty pallor about it. Even the sunlight streaming in the back windows seemed old somehow, like it was moving slower than usual.

Various tikis and wooden totems lined the shelf immediately to her left, while rows and rows of books were on shelves to her right. She spotted a collection of jars filled with different body parts such as eyes, tongues and livers; none of them belonging to humans (she silently hoped).

“Now hurry on, Victoria, hurry on,” she felt the old man’s hand gently push her forward to a dusty counter across from the doorway. “You already know what you want and you’ve got your own personal shopper with you, so there’s not much point in browsing, is there?’

“I…guess not,” she conceded and approached the counter.

“Now before we begin,” the Professor stated, walking around the counter to where a clerk would be. “the Magic Emporium has two very important rules.” He gestured to a sign immediately behind him.

It Read:

All Sales Are Final. No Returns, Refunds, or Do Overs.

The Customer is Always Right.

Victoria looked at the words and thought. “What does that last part about the customer mean?” she asked.

“Quite simply,” the old humbug explained, “I am required to give you what you ask for, even if I do not particularly agree with it. I have shown you trust and allowed you into my Emporium, and therefore I cannot refuse you service so long as you offer payment.”

“Oh,” was all Victoria could say to that.

“Now, where shall we begin?” Professor Bumble reached under the counter and hefted up a large tome, easily as big as a suitcase. Etched into the cover was the title: “Big Old Book of Curses”.

“I’m betting this nemesis of yours is quite vain,” the old man said, “most are. So how about a baldness curse for starters?” The tome opened by itself to an illustration of a bald woman crying.

Victoria thought for a moment. No. Abbie would likely either buy wigs so no one would notice, or make up a story to get sympathy like cancer or donating her hair to charity, or turn baldness into the newest school trend. Abbie Delaney could pull off bald, probably.

Besides, part of Victoria still believed that this was a hoax, and if she was going to be ripped off, she’d want to be ripped off for dreaming big or go home. Victoria shook her head.

“Alright, how about a bad luck curse?” Professor Bumble proposed. “Can’t go wrong with bad luck. Seven years in fact.” The pages flipped in front of Victoria to show a broken mirror. “You can’t predict what will happen but there is at least a sixty-six point six percent chance that she will be hit by a car at some point. There’s a premium version and a discount version” he added. “The discount version is non-lethal, but that in no way changes the odds of vehicular impact.”

Victoria had actually seen the movie “Mean Girls,” and was well aware what a bitch with cause for sympathy could accomplish. Maybe cursing Abbie Delaney wasn’t the way to go. “I don’t think so,” she told the Professor. Then, she asked, “Is there any way we could make me better, instead of just making her worse?”

“Not with this book, I’m afraid,” Bumble conceded, “But I have others.” The Big Book of Curses closed itself, and from underneath the counter, he produced a book labeled “The Little Book of Symbiotic Spells and Enchantments.” It wasn’t exactly little. It was actually about the size of one of Victoria’s textbooks, but she supposed that size was all relative.

She glanced at the cover. “Symbiotic spells?”

“Ah, I forget already that I am in the presence of a true neophyte,” Professor Bumble chuckled. “To put it simply, some spells are so potent that they are, in a manner of speaking, alive.”

“Alive how?” Victoria queried, feeling worried.

“They worm their way into your soul and wrap themselves around you” he explained. “They live inside of you and in return give you their beneficial properties.”

Victoria let that idea roll around in her head for a moment, before clarifying, “Does that mean that curses are like parasites?”

“Essentially,” the old man confirmed, stroking his beard thoughtfully. “But that’s neither here nor there. Here, let’s have you try one out for size. Let’s start with the free sample.”

The book flipped by itself to a page. There was no illustration on this one. Instead, in big, bold, black calligraphy, was the phrase, “HAIR SPRAY FIXES EVERYTHING”.

“Free sample?” Victoria arched an eyebrow.

“Well,” Professor Bumble shrugged, “I can afford free demonstrations on enchantments. Beneficial magic makes most people want to buy more. If I give free demonstrations on curses, either a sadist uses them to inflict quick and petty suffering, or an idiot botches things up on themselves and I don’t get paid either way.”

“What am I supposed to do with this?” Victoria asked, gesturing towards the open page.

“Just put your hand on the page, and say the words,” Professor Bumble instructed her.

Victoria looked to her left, and then to her right to make sure there were no onlookers. Some tiny part of her still suspected this was an elaborate hidden camera prank. Finally satisfied that there were no cameras or microphones in the rather dreary looking space, Victoria placed her hand on the page and mumbled-

“Hair spray fixes everything.”

She took her hand off of the page. Nothing.

“Come on now, girl, this is magic not mathematics,” the old-timer prodded her, “You can’t just say the words you have to saaaaay the words. Put some emphasis on them, give it some feeling, SAY THEM!”

Annoyed, Victoria grunted some curse words to herself and placed her hand on the page again and closed her eyes. “HAIR SPRAY FIXES EVERYTHING!” she shouted.

She felt a warmth emanating from the page and opened her eyes. The big bold words were glowing red. They flashed briefly and then disappeared from the page. “Jesus fuck balls!” Victoria exclaimed still staring at the now empty page.

Victoria felt a sudden and profound tingling between her legs that intensified into a zap. She felt her pulse speed up a bit and warmth spread outward from below her waist. Her breathing became shallow and she had the sudden urge to stick her hands down the front of her pants, regardless of who may be watching, and idly play with herself.

“That will be quite enough,” the Professors’ grandfatherly voice brought her out of her haze.

Victoria shook her head swiftly to clear the sudden fog out of her mind. “Woof,” she exhaled. “Didn’t expect that.”

“Oh?” Professor Bumble intoned. “Did I forget to mention that casting magic tends to have that effect on people? And that was just a minor spell. You now know why so few mages tend to get married.”

“No joke,” Victoria panted.

“Neither is this.”

The professor held a mirror up to Victoria’s face. Victoria saw her reflection and swore in surprise.

“Shit cock hole!” Victoria’s normally short auburn hair had somehow gained enough length and volume to expand and wrap around her head into a positively hideous beehive hairdo. Her hands shot up to the top of her head and felt it. Not only was her hair styled up like her uncle’s current girlfriend- the one with the mole- but it felt as if at least a half can too much hairspray had been applied. Victoria had felt astro-turf silkier than this mess.

“Believe it or not,” Professor Bumble said in the tone of a co-worker giving random trivia at the water cooler, “That spell was actually very popular in the early nineteen-sixties.”

Victoria tugged at her hair in vain, trying to rip it off like a wig. “Getitoff getitoff getitoff!” she panicked. Regardless of how disturbed and unhappy she was, Victoria was at the very least convinced beyond reasonable doubt that magic existed and that she had cast a spell.

“Sorry. Can’t,” the Professor informed her. Victoria stopped tugging at her scalp.

“Well, why the hell not?” she asked incredulously.

“First and foremost, that’s not how these spells work,” Bumble explained. “You’ve got magic living inside you, now. I can’t just take a hook and reach inside you and rip it out.” He thought for a brief moment before saying, “Well I suppose I could, but that would be terribly messy and I can’t afford janitorial services in this place.”

“So how do I get it the fuck twat out?!” Victoria screamed in indignation.

“You buy another spell, of course,” the old codger smiled a toothy shit-eating grin.

“How will that help?!” Victoria asked, literally beginning to shake with rage. Gods, she felt hideous.

“The human soul is only so big in truth. Most people can only fit one, maybe two, spells at a time inside them. So as soon as you cast another spell, that one will pop right out in a jiffy and your hair will be un-hived.”

“Why would you do this to me?!” Victoria shouted. “I was going to buy a spell anyways!”

“Sincerest apologies, my dear, just having a bit of fun,” the magician continued to grin. “To be honest with you, I have new customers try that one out first to keep them from getting cold feet. I abhor window shoppers.”

Victoria slowed her breathing and huffed a few times while regaining her composure. “Promise THIS,” she pointed to her hair, “will go back to normal once I’ve found a spell that I actually want?”

“Unless you want to style your hair into something more becoming.” The Professor told her. “Actually, I was going to suggest this spell for your revenge.” He waved his hand and the pages of the “Little Book of Symbiotic Spells and Enchantments” turned themselves to another page.

The page had the same big, bold, black calligraphy. This time reading: “HOTTER THAN HELL”.

“Forgive me for making assumptions, my dear,” Professor Bumble said, “but may I assume that the girl who you wish revenge upon is considered quite attractive?”

Victoria nodded. A big part of the reason why Abbie Delaney got away with even half of the shit she did was because she was pretty. Her attitude and self-confidence only magnified what nature had blessed her with.

“Well, I can guarantee you that this spell will exceed even the greatest earthly beauty,” the magician assured her. “You’re aware of the tale of Cinderella, yes?”

Victoria nodded. She liked where this was going.

“Let’s just say that I haggled this spell away from a certain Godmother a few decades ago, and ever since Marilyn Monroe, I’ve been dying to try it out again.”

“Really?!” Victoria wondered, wide eyed.

“While a magician is not above deception,” Professor Bumble said, placing one hand over his heart while raising the other as if taking a solemn vow, “I never lie. This spell will accomplish all that, I guarantee you.”

“At what price?” Victoria asked, finding caution in her excitement.

The old man stroked his beard thoughtfully, and hemmed and hawed for a second. He licked his lips and pursed them several times before finally giving an answer.

“You seem like a nice girl. What about a payment plan?” he proposed. “Twenty percent of all of your financial earnings for the next twenty years. Deal?”

That seemed remarkably fair, considering he was offering to turn her into a literal Cinderella, (Or Marilyn Monroe. Either way it was win-win as far as Victoria was concerned). “Deal”, she said.

“Then place your hands upon the page, and speak the words,” the magician hooted, “and before you know it that girl will be a small town peasant compared to your regal good looks!”

Victoria closed her eyes and put her palm on the page, readying herself to say the words. But a little niggling feeling ate at her. This wasn’t good enough. She didn’t hate Abbie Delaney for being prettier than her. She hated Abbie Delaney for dedicating so much time to making Victoria feel like she was less than human. She hated that Abbie Delaney didn’t receive scorn for these objectively horrible actions, but praise instead. She hated that Abbie Delaney always won and never lost. It wouldn’t be enough to make her a loser by winning more than her, Victoria had a need to make Abbie a loser by actually making her a loser AND making herself a winner.

“No,” she said, taking her hand away from the page.

“No?” Professor Bumble seemed surprised.

“No,” Victoria repeated. She took a deep breath. She had to phrase this correctly so that he would understand. “Is there any way that I can take something from her, and get something for myself? A way to really make her suffer? A way to steal everything good from her and keep it for myself?”

“Oh my,” Bumble remarked, raising both of his eyebrows. “You really have it in for this girl, don’t you?”

Victoria said nothing, but let the pain and hatred that shown in her eyes at thinking about Abbie do the talking for her.

“I don’t normally do this for first time customers,” Professor Bumble confided to her, “but you are my first customer in this location. So…” he waved his hand and the Little Book of Symbiotic Spells and Enchantments flipped over to its final page.

“It’s blank,” Victoria spoke bluntly.

“It’s not,” Professor Bumble assured her. “It’s just hidden. To even look upon this spell is to risk temptation and meddle with a power too dangerous for most.” He leaned in, lowering his voice to barely above a whisper. “Have you ever heard that the Devil’s greatest trick is convincing mankind that he didn’t exist?”

“Yeah…?” Victoria leaned in, her own voice lowering to match his.

“Well, this spell, which I am bound not to divulge how I came across it, contains his second greatest trick: Convincing mankind that he was someone else entirely. Invoke this spell against whomever you wish, and you shall trade lives with that person. The loved become hated, and the hated become loved; the rich become poor and vice versa, and no one will ever remember that it ever was any different.”

“How else,” he continued, “do you suppose that Lucifer went from being depicted as an angel, and then suddenly as some kind of burning goat man?” The magician straightened his back and shook his head as he tsked, “Poor Pan.” Then he took a breath, and said in his normal speaking voice, “Cast this spell, and you will literally trade this girl’s life for your own.”

“How much of her life?” Victoria pressed. “Give me specifics.”

“Most everything you could reasonably imagine,” the magician informed her flatly. “Her relative wealth, her popularity, her clothes, her relationships with friends and parents; pretty much most any tangible or intangible quality of her life. And she in turn will get yours.”

Victoria furrowed her brow. This still wasn’t clear enough. “I mean, like, will her parents become my parents? And will my hair turn blonde? And will my boobs get….bigger?” Victoria wasn’t what you would call flat chested, and didn’t often think such things mattered, but Abbie Delaney had definitely been blessed and burdened in that area more than she had. Besides, if Victoria was going to end up with Abbie’s clothes, she’d better well be able to fit in them.

“More importantly,” Victoria added, “Will I turn into a ruthless bitch? The sort of person that I hate?”

“What? Oh, no, no, no.” the Professor let out a brief chuckle. “This spell is potent, but it doesn’t actually change who you are or what you look like. It just changes how people think of you, their memory of you, and how they treat you. If you cast this spell, you’ll be known as the popular girl with gorgeous clothes and lots of money, and she’ll be well…” he gestured to Victoria, “you. No offense…” he added.

“None taken.” Victoria shrugged.

“Your parents will still be your parents, but they’ll start treating you the same way your nemesis’s parents treat her,” the crazy coot elucidated. “Though, her friends might just suddenly become your friends. So there’s that. Also, if she has any major physical abilities that define how others perceive her, those will become yours too. So if she’s a good dancer, you’ll be able to cut a rug, too. Oh, and of course her clothes will all change to fit you.”

A whole army of sheep people at her command, and the agility of a cheerleading captain. All the while Victoria might be left with at best an encyclopedic knowledge of cult classic comedies.

“But be careful,” Professor Bumble cautioned, “this is a double edged sword. You’re taking her whole life, not just the good parts.”

“Like?”

“Like if her parents are cold and distant to her, then yours will be too. Or if she has a chronic medical condition or some other dark secret, it becomes your medical condition and your dark secret.”

Victoria frowned, thinking. “Worth the risk,” she concluded. “Let’s talk about price. How much?”

Professor Bumble’s eyes narrowed. “Half a billion. Up front.”

“I can’t afford that,” Victoria frowned.

“It’s a doozy of a spell, and the last person who promised to pay in installments, stiffed me on the bill. I can’t afford to set up a payment plan for this one. It’s just too valuable.”

“Who the hell was that?!” Victoria fumed. Great, somebody stiffed the wizard on the bill and now the cost is passed onto her. Who knew revenge could be so expensive?

“President Lyndon Johnson. He purchased this spell from me on November, twenty-first, nineteen sixty-three.”

“But Johnson wasn’t president then,” Victoria remarked, “Kennedy was, and November twenty-first was the day before he was-“ a realization hit Victoria. “Oh…..”

“Yes,” Bumble confirmed. “Johnson was aware of an assassination plot and bravely chose to switch lives with his vice-president.”

“Man, that’s dark.” Victoria scoffed.

“Indeed,” Professor Bumble agreed. “So, do you have half a billion dollars or not?”

Victoria’s shoulders slumped. She really wanted to have the sweetest of revenges on Abbie, and now that she couldn’t, settling for anything else, no matter how fantastical, felt so anticlimactic.

“Isn’t there anything else you’d take as payment?” Victoria asked, on the verge of pleading. She now wanted this spell so badly she was preparing to beg on her knees if that might soften the old coot’s heart just a bit.

“Well…” the old man twirled his mustache thoughtfully, “there is one thing. How do you feel about trading me…” he paused for obvious dramatic effect, “your common sense?”

“My what?” she asked.

“Your common sense,” he repeated. “You won’t be stupid by any stretch of the imagination, but you just won’t have much in the way of practicality. Of course,” he added, “you won’t need much practicality if this spell works anyways, will you? Beautiful, popular people rarely need it. Also,” he piled on, “it’s what I was going to charge you for the beauty spell if you had balked at the twenty percent offer, so really I’m losing on the deal.”

Once again, Victoria mulled the offer over a bit. Was she really willing to give over a part of herself for this perfect revenge? Then the thought occurred to her: How much common sense did she really have to lose? If she had a lot of common sense, she would have likely been able to find a way to get back at Abbie Delaney by now, or at least avoid the bitch.

Maybe she could haggle with the old man; trade something else. Frankly, she was surprised sexual favors hadn’t come into the offer, but then again, he had said that most magicians aren’t married for a reason. Ultimately, greed won out over caution and Victoria said “Let’s do it.”

“Done and done,” Professor Bumble agreed and waved his hand over the last empty page of the book. “And with the taking of my payment, I present to you the Devil’s second greatest trick.”

Victoria felt light-headed for the briefest of seconds, and then felt perfectly fine. From the blank page popped splattered, brownish letters, instead of the neatly written phrases of previous spells. It almost looked like the words had been written long ago in blood. The page filled itself in randomly, like a hangman puzzle gradually coming together. A letter here, a letter there until finally the page read:

“KNOW THY ENEMY AND KNOW THYSELF (SAY VICTIM’S NAME)”.

Professor Bumble pointed to the part in parenthesis. “This part here,” he indicated, “is where you’re supposed to say the name of the person who you want to switch lives with. You don’t actually say ‘Say Victim’s Name’.”

“I know that,” Victoria snipped at him.

“Just being thorough, my dear. Had to make sure you knew, since you have no common sense anymore. Didn’t want you having buyer’s remorse because you cast the spell wrong.”

Victoria just rolled her eyes and put her right hand, palm flat on the page. Then, she closed her eyes and said:

“KNOW THY ENEMY AND KNOW THYSELF, ABBIE DELANEY!”

THUMP-UMP! Victoria felt, more than heard the vibration. For a brief instant, Victoria felt as if she were an amplifier with the base cranked to eleven for a single note. The letters on the page glowed a burning white this time, and as Victoria opened her eyes she was nearly blinded by the illuminated pages right before they

THUMP-UMP!

She felt the same energy pass through her as before and intensify a hundred fold. What had been a mere tingling between her legs before became a pulsing ache. Her heart raced and her whole body flushed with a mixture of embarrassment and pleasure.

THUMP-UMP! THUMP-UMP!

Victoria resisted the urge to cross her legs, and began panting. Her nipples became hard and rigid. She felt a deep, nearly insane, need to be filled up. She arched her back and moaned as she felt something warm manifest in her panties, the pulse between her legs now more intense and infinitely more urgent than the pulse in her chest. She felt warm and damp, her toes curling

as she felt something entering her. The hairs on the back of her neck stood on edge and her entire skin danced with electricity.

THUMP-UMP! THUMP-UMP! THUMP-UMP!

“Ooooooooh,” she groaned, feeling wave after wave of intense feeling hit her as each sensation became more magnified and distorted. She lost all conscious thought as her knees buckled and she found herself writhing on the hard, dusty floor of the shop.

THUMP-UMP THUMP-UMP THUMP-UMP THUMP-UMP!

Time lost meaning, as did her other senses. The pressure inside her was like a dam, with each new wave eroding her control and rational though. Only ecstatic pleasure would remain, she realized happily. Her mind was a sea of white, and every time the feelings between her legs intensified, it was like a wave of neon and tie dye rising to crash against the walls of her. Each wave a little higher, matching the slickness and increasing heat coming from her crotch. Until finally, after a mini eternity, the dam broke loose and Victoria screamed in relief while she gyrated on the floor, her pants becoming soaked with her own fluids.

She laid there, on the floor, panting, eyes closed, a stupid, self-satisfied smile on her face.

“VICTORIA VALLENCOURT! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, YOUNG LADY?!”

Victoria’s eyes shot open. That was her mother’s voice! She looked around in bewilderment. She was standing on the doorstep of her house, covered in sweat and reeking of sex. At the door, in all of her angry and stout glory, was Victoria’s mother.

“Do you have any idea what time it is?! I’ve been calling you for hours! I was about to call the police!”

What had happened? Victoria knocked the cobwebs out of her head and looked around. In truth, Victoria didn’t know what time it was. The sun had set and the street lights were on. In the distance, she could hear crickets chirping. How long had she been gone?! The adrenaline of hearing her angry mother’s voice and having lost time on her hands quickly ebbed amidst the familiar shouting of her mom.

“Sorry,” Victoria mumbled, a slight after-buzz of whatever had invaded her body at the magic shop still lingering. She found it difficult to even keep her eyes open, and even though she knew herself to be awake, Victoria felt as though she was sleepwalking.

“Oh my goodness, you smell awful!” Mrs. Vallencourt exclaimed, taking her daughter by the hand. Victoria let herself be dragged inside. “Are you on the drugs? It’s drugs, isn’t it?! Tell me which of the drugs you’re on!”

Victoria shambled past her mother, ignoring her completely. She was just too fuckin’ tired to care right now and would deal with the consequences in the morning. Some rational part of her brain screamed that she had been drugged and more than likely violated in some fashion or another, but right now she just didn’t care. She wanted to get to sleep.

“Talk about it tomorrow…” Victoria droned sleepily still trudging towards her bedroom.

“DON’T YOU DARE WALK AWAY FROM ME WHEN I’M TALKING TO YOU, VICTORIA!” her mother screeched. “I’m warning you: If you walk away from me, there will be dire consequences in the morning!”

Victoria slammed and locked the door of her bedroom.

“Whatevs…queefmobile.” she yawned. The selfish lizard part of her brain told her that if everything she remembered was really a magical spell, none of this would matter by tomorrow either way, and if she had been assaulted, then she could play the victim card. Either way her mom would be singing a different song in the morning. Damn…that was a type of thought that didn’t normally creep into her. Maybe she had more in common with Abbie Delaney than she thought. Or maybe the spell was changing more of her than advertised.

She let her pants drop off and kicked them across the floor of her room. It was plain, and kind of generic. Most teenagers turned their room into a kind of shrine to themselves. For Victoria, it was really just a place to sleep. Beige walls, a dresser, a bed with white sheets and blankets. If not for a few photographs of herself, you’d never guess who lived there.

Victoria took off her t-shirt and bra, which quickly joined the pants on the hardwood floor. Making it to the clothes hamper was just way too much effort at this point in time. Lastly, she slid off her underwear which had been heavily soiled by this point. She’d sleep in the nude tonight. If the old man at the ice cream shop was to be believed, she’d have a new wardrobe anyways. Granted, it would be a wardrobe that before today Victoria wouldn’t have been caught dead in, but if foregoing pants meant watching Abbie Delaney be spat upon, that would be Victoria’s cross to bear.

Just before crawled under the sheets to allow sleep to claim her, she noticed a folded card resting daintily on her pillow. The card was addressed to her and on the inside it read:

“Spell takes a while to reach full effect. Had to close the shop for the night. Dropped you off. You should start seeing tangible results in the morning. LBJ did. –B

P.S. You may also feel some aftershocks while the spell takes full effect. Given that you seemed to enjoy it I'm not sure if I should apologize or not,"

Victoria's eyes widened, and with them a lazy smile flashed briefly into maniacal. The odds of today's encounter not being supernatural in nature just slimmed considerably.

"Yesssssssss," Victoria hissed as she crawled into bed. She was asleep before her head hit the pillow.

Victoria awoke the next morning; not to the blaring buzzing of an alarm clock as she normally did on a school day, but to the sunshine hitting her face, the sounds of birds chirping outside and the hums of automobiles outside on the streets outside her house. Likewise, her eyelids did not open at once- her fight or flight response when triggered by cacophonous ringing- but did the slow fluttering waltz of gradual awakening.

Open slightly. Then close. Breathe deep, exhale. Crave sleep. Open slightly. Close. Breathe deep. Try to sleep a little more. Repeat until it is readily apparently to your mind and body that no more sleep will come. Open.

Victoria yawned and groaned. She turned over onto her belly so that she could get her legs up under her and stretch like a cat. But something was off. Her bedsheets weren't flowing like they normally did. Instead, she had the distinct sensation of her sheets sticking to her legs.

She rolled back over to examine herself.

"Holy…!" she cut herself off. The damp and clammy wetness clung to her below the waist in her bed. Her synapses finally registered the messages that her nose was sending her: the smell of stale urine. The white bedsheets did little to nothing to hide the yellow stains making them.

"Goddamnit!" Victoria swore, as she peeled layers of pee stained sheets and blankets off of herself. The morning air hit her urine soaked privates and legs, and while that woke her up, that did little to alleviate her feeling of uncleanliness. Victoria wasn't a poet, which may have been a good thing, because there's honestly no poetic way to describe having pissed the bed.

She got out of the bed on tiptoes, while standing bow legged. She didn't want to be in her own skin at the moment, and even the thought of her urine-marinated thighs brushing against each other disgusted her to no end. She just felt unclean.

Victoria hadn't wet the bed since she was two, and the act disgusted her so that she had made a solemn vow to never let it happen again. A promise she had kept till now and hadn't intended till at least college where she had no doubt that she'd let loose after getting roaring drunk at some party or another.

Her absolute hatred of wading around in her own waste most likely came from her earliest memories of potty training. Victoria's mother had gone to the trouble of cloth diapering her only child. She read in a book somewhere that doing so allowed them to be easier to potty train, since the diapers did not wick the wetness away from the skin, making it a much less pleasant experience. This fact, of course, and the fact that it was Victoria's mother's choice in the first place to forego modern day convenience in favor of long term planning did not dissuade her from long tirades about having had to change AND wash Victoria's diapers.

This must have been what Professor Bumble had been warning her about regarding double edged swords. Abbie Delaney, the bitch, must have had the dirty little secret of being a bedwetter. That was the only rational explanation. Victoria was certain she wouldn't have had this accident happen to her otherwise.

To her surprise, Victoria's feet landed on plush carpet instead of the trusty old hardwood flooring the night before. She looked down and confirmed it to make sure she wasn't deceiving herself. Those floors definitely weren't there the night before, and so she received yet another piece of evidence that the magic was working. This time, likely, to her favor.

She stared at her soiled bed in disgust, too absorbed in the wretched sight to bother looking for her missing alarm clock. She'd have to strip the sheets and wash them, preferably before Mom came knocking, but first thing was first, and that meant a shower.

Still bow legged, Victoria practically crab walked to her bathroom, turned the water in the shower to scalding hot, and stepped in. She let the water boil out the tension and the sense of disgust as she washed and re-washed her legs and privates again and again. Suddenly she felt a pulse of sorts. Not in her heartbeat or down between her legs, but in her very perceptions itself.

THUMP-UMP!

Had she been viewing the world from outside herself, like in a movie, Victoria was certain it would have appeared as a kind of ripple effect spreading out from her at the center. As matters stood now, she couldn't see the pulse as much as feel it in her mind. Soon after the perceived ripple, though, imagined or otherwise, she had felt a slightly more familiar pulse begin to ache from inside her. A "pulse" that she had experienced as recently as the previous night.

Damn it, she was getting horny again. Being in the comfort and privacy of her own bathroom however, made the job much easier, and rather than fighting the urge, Victoria dislodged the adjustable shower head, turned down the heat ever so slightly, closed her eyes, and finished herself off relatively quickly.

"Aftershocks," she muttered when she was done.

She really hoped this increased libido wouldn't be a permanent side-effect of the magic. Otherwise she'd need to get a vibrator…assuming Abbie didn't already own one. Then again Abbie was never short on boy toys, so Victoria felt she had little reason to worry.

Victoria walked back into her own room, dripping wet, but smelling and feeling much cleaner than she had either the past night before bed, or this morning when she woke up. In her post masturbation haze, she hadn't bothered to wrap herself in a towel and was surprised to see-

"Mom?!"

Mrs. Vallencourt was in her daughter's room, bunching up the stained and soiled sheets from the bed.

"Oh, hi honey," Victoria's mother greeted her daughter. "Heard you were awake and so I decided to come clean up."

Victoria crossed her legs and tried to cover herself up with her just hands. "Mom!" she shrieked. "I'm naked! Get out!" Mrs. Vallencourt just rolled her eyes, good naturedly, and grinned turning around.

"Victoria, you don't have anything I haven't seen before, honey," her mother said. "Besides," she added "It looks like someone had an accident, so I had best clean it up before these sheets become ruined."

Victoria couldn't help but blush as her mother turned around, more-than-dirty laundry bunched up in her arms and walked out of the room without bothering to shut the door behind her. Abbie must have been very close with her parents and the effect was rubbing off on Mom now that Victoria had stolen her life.

Stolen her life. Victoria smiled at that thought. So what if she was now a bed wetter? It would be worth it if it meant for once she could lord over Abbie Delaney and force her to sit with the other losers at lunch. Victoria walked over to her dresser and opened up the top drawer where she normally kept her underwear.

Panties. Dozens of white, neatly folded panties. Victoria reached in and pulled a few out to inspect them. They weren't completely white, actually, but they were all decorated about the same. Each one had a picture of Mickey and Minnie Mouse on the front, Minnie's own panties peeking out from under her red and white polka dot dress (classy, Minnie, classy), while the back featured a lone larger portrait of the main mouse himself. The leg and waist bands were little rings of pastel purple and baby blue.

What kind of freak had Abbie Delaney been? Seriously, it was kind of cute underwear in a little girl kind of way, but who had this many pairs of matching panties? Another major downside to this whole arrangement, Victoria thought, is that she was suddenly gaining a boat load of great black mail material on Abbie that she could never use. Abbie's secrets were hers now and hers were Abbie's, but unfortunately, Victoria didn't really have any damning secrets prior to this morning.

If only there had been a spell that gave her Abbie Delaney's social standing without her wardrobe. Some things even magic couldn't accomplish it seemed.

Victoria sincerely hoped that she could make some drastic changes to her newly acquired life down the line, but for today, the Disney panties would have to do. She stepped into a pair and pulled them up onto her hips.

Next, she put on a bra which seemed exactly the same as any of her other bras; meaning that either she and her nemesis shared the same taste in brassieres, or that whatever magic was altering her life hadn't made it to her boob holsters yet.

Then, Victoria walked to her closet doors, said a quiet prayer, and flung the doors open. The magic had definitely started to work there. Not only had her closet become at least 20 square feet bigger- a feat that might make her living room smaller, redesign the whole house, or defy the laws of physics- but from hangers everywhere were dresses. Dresses, dresses, and more dresses. Big dresses, small dresses, flowery dresses, plain dresses, frilly dresses, and skimpy little numbers. And almost no pants whatsoever.

"Well, shit," Victoria muttered. "I at least saw this one coming," she told herself. Not taking much time to select one, she took a pink sleeveless number off the hangar and slipped it on. A matching belt around her waist quickly gave shape to her hips, and a headband with a bow on it found its rightful place atop her head.

Victoria stepped out of the closet and looked herself in her vanity mirror. She felt ridiculous. She looked more like a toddler than a sex kitten. But women were so often infantilized in the media that there really wasn't much difference these days. The trick was confidence, she knew, but she just couldn't make herself feel it. The hem of her dress barely reached her knees and she was anything but comfortable in this getup.

She dashed into her closet and rummaged around for about half a minute before she found a pair of black bike shorts to squeeze into. That was a little better. She wouldn't mind if boys stared at her ass if she was certain they wouldn't get a glimpse of good 'ol Mickey smiling back at them.

Still, she was dressed, and willing herself to be more confident. Today was the day of her revenge at long last. If she could keep the popularity aspect, everything in her new closet would be going to the Goodwill store within a month anyways, so what did it matter for one day?

“Oh, for cryin’ the fuck-McNuggets out loud!” Victoria yelled when she came out of her new closet. Her entire room, in the span of a few moments had been repainted pink. Not just any pink though: Bright Pink. Baby Doll Aisle at the toy store pink. Mattel pink.

“The fuck, Abbie?! How girly were you?” Victoria wonder aloud before slipping on a pair of socks and comfortable sneakers. The myriad of shoes, it seemed, had yet to arrive. Oh well, that village in Africa would have to wait till later in the day when the spell had taken full effect in order to get its shoes.

Victoria walked into the kitchen, ready to get some breakfast and then head off to school. She heard the steady hum of the washing machine in the laundry room, as she scavenged the refrigerator for something she could eat along the way. If the sun was up, she knew, she should be leaving any second now if she wanted to get to school on time, or at least fashionably late.

“Hellooooo,” she mused when her eyes saw a pink insulated lunch bag on top of the fridge. Even better, the bag had the letters “V.V.” monogrammed on the side. While Victoria normally settled for the school lunch, she had never seen Abbie stoop so low as to eat processed food like a commoner, and Victoria had long noted her monogramed lunch bags. She zipped the bag open and inspected its contents.

“Banana, apple, some green beans in a plastic baggie. Probably all organic or some shit. Yup this is Abbie’s,” Victoria smirked. “Or should I say, mine.” Not bad. Not bad at all. She wasn’t much for green beans, but she supposed she could eat an apple during a casual walk to school. Victoria glanced at the microwave, and the number “10:30” flashed across the screen.

“Ohmygod I’m late!” Victoria began to panic. “Mom!” she called. “Why didn’t you wake me up?”

Victoria’s mother walked into the kitchen. “What do you mean dear?” her mother asked, gently. “I almost always let you sleep unless I’ve got plans. And even then you usually sleep in the car.”

Abbie Delaney didn’t use an alarm clock and had had a mother that was so doting she didn’t bother to wake her up for school. What had Victoria gotten herself into? For the first time, but likely not the last, Victoria had wished that she took Professor Bumble up on his original offer of a curse or at least a less complicated enchantment.

Victoria didn’t have time for regrets, though, as every cell in her body was tingling with the dreaded anxiety that only the lamest of the lame develop when ditching school. Victoria hadn’t

even done senior skip day! Victoria sprinted out the door, monogrammed lunch bag in tow, with her mother calling after her in some sort of panic. Victoria didn't even bother listening.

Academia was on the line, goddamnit! Without even thinking about grabbing her books, (come to think of it she hadn't noticed…where would Abbie Delaney have kept her books anyways?) Victoria dashed all the way to school.

Victoria stopped when she reached the front entrance, panting with her hands on her knees. She was breathing so hard, she feared she might collapse and that just wouldn't do. It was revenge day! Revenge day! Day of revenge! At the very least, Victoria was inwardly grateful for the bike shorts covering her Disney underwear. The breeze blowing at the back of her thighs told her that she was stooped over just enough to risk a peek.

"Sexy, heh, heh," she panted, trying to gather her breath. It was time to get into character. "Confidant, hoof…wew." She breathed in through her nose and out through her mouth. "Heh…heh…I'm the queen bitch now. I am."

She stood out and smoothed out her dress before adjusting her posture. Cool, calm, and collected; that's what she was. That's who she was. She wasn't sweating, she was glistening. There was a subtle difference. And with that in mind, she strode into the hallways.

The clock on the wall said "10:45", and if you counted the five minutes she spent catching her breath, that meant that Victoria had just ran a ten-minute mile. Not great, but not bad. She was supposed to be in Calculus right now, with just fifteen minutes left for lunch period. Plenty of time to witness Abbie Delaney as the pathetic tomboy that nobody liked and then start holding court proper, in the cafeteria as the new queen of the school.

"Now of course, class," Mr. Morrison had been droning on, "if we take the negative square root of i and plug it into the formula-"

Victoria flung the doors open and strutted into the classroom. The room went silent in her glory. Gasps were heard at first, followed by shushed "Awwwws" from the girls. Victoria looked around the room. All eyes were on her, and not one of them cast pity or scorn. The only thing she saw in any of them was pure, unadulterated fascination and above all else, love. So this is what it felt like to be Abbie Delaney. There wasn't as much lust in the eyes of the boys, but having never seen it directed at her before, Victoria might have been wrong about that assessment. Victoria allowed herself a smile.

"Excuse me, what is the meaning of this?" Mr. Morrison asked, staring straight at Victoria.

Victoria smirked. "Sorry, teach," she said, "but I slept in today." The entire class erupted into raucous laughter, knee slaps, more "awwws", and the veiled pointing of fingers, and for once in

her life none of them were pointed at Victoria. Oh yes! She had the power now! Even Mr. Morrison seemed more confused and slightly annoyed than anything.

“Vicky?” a far too familiar voice called out. Victoria turned and saw Abbie Delaney. But it was not Abbie Delaney living the life of a high school loser. It was just Abbie Delaney. Just Abbie. Nothing changed about her. Still with her blonde hair pulled back into a tight ponytail, with perfectly manicured hands, and a hot little short skirt that made Victoria’s knee high dress seem quaint by comparison.

Abbie walked up the row of desks and went right up to Victoria and looked her in the eye. How was this possible? The magician had promised Victoria a life swap, not a poor replication. And presumably, if magic had any rhyme or reason, as Victoria gained an aspect of Abbie, Abbie was supposed to become more like Victoria. But right now, completely unchanged and standing in front of her, was Victoria’s unblemished nemesis. Instantly, Victoria’s fantasy come true was becoming a very bad dream.

“Vicky?” Abbie Delaney repeated, forcing Victoria to focus. Abbie smiled. “Oh my gosh! Vicky! It’s so good to see you.” And then Abbie did the unthinkable. She hugged Victoria. Victoria stood there awkwardly frozen in her worst enemy’s warm embrace.

“Miss Delaney, would you care to explain the interruption?” Mr. Morrison asked pointedly.

“Oh, this is just Vicky.” Abbie, the queen bee, said matter-of-factly. “She’s a friend of mine”

“Friend?” Victoria said, surprised and alarmed. Worse yet, there wasn’t even a hint of that old familiar sarcasm. The spell hadn’t changed Abbie Delaney’s clothes, but had definitely done something to her mind.

“Of course we’re friends!” Abbie turned her attention to Victoria. “We hang out all the time on the weekends, don’t we?”

Victoria’s mouth hung open in a stupor. Of all the curveballs she had encountered since waking up, this was by far the curviest. Now they hung out on weekends? Had Victoria cast the wrong spell? Had she said the words wrong? They had been written in English, hadn’t they?

As for Abbie’s question, Victoria couldn’t help but answer honestly. “The fuck if I know!” she screeched in a panicky falsetto. The class roared with laughter at this confession, but a quick glare from Mr. Morrison cut the cackling short.

Like usual, Abbie Delaney was immune to a teacher’s reproachful looks. “Look, Mr. Morrison,” Abbie told the man, “Vicky is a friend of mine. She usually visits me during lunch period, or after school. Clearly she’s a little bit early,” there were stifled snickers at that, “and she got away and

came to find me. So can she please keep me company for a few minutes till lunch so her mother won't worry?"

Mr. Morrison stared. "Very well, Abigail. But if she causes a fuss, both of you are out of here. Are we clear?"

"Crystal"

"Fine. Eyes front and center everyone!" the teacher barked.

"Why don't they recognize me?" Victoria asked aloud, hoping someone, anyone besides Abbie would answer her.

"These guys don't normally eat lunch with me, honey," Abbie whispered an explanation that in no way sufficed. "But my lunch buddies will be so surprised and happy to see you. Nobody told me you were coming today." She added.

"This is my school, too, I don't need to call," Victoria whispered back, indignantly. Victoria found herself being led to the back row, past her own desk and straight to Abbie's.

She heard Abbie chuckle to herself. "Not yet, honey, but give it time." Abbie whispered. "Now come sit down with me."

Victoria glanced around. Her desk sat empty in the third row.

"But my desk is up there," she pointed out and made a move to go to it. In truth, she wasn't even thinking about sitting down, but was working with the modus operandi of "Say something to distance yourself and then run away as far and as fast as humanly possible."

She felt a hand latch onto her wrist and keep her rooted in the aisle. Abbie Delaney had a hold of her and was still smiling, though the nature of the smile had changed. Now, it was the thin, forced smile of someone who was trying very hard to maintain composure and not cause a scene.

"Oh, don't be silly!" Abbie insisted and pulled Victoria into her lap. Victoria's arms and legs scrambled for a millisecond, looking for purchase of some kind. She tried to get out of Abbie's lap, and only made it as far as her enemy's knee before Abbie had wrapped her hands around Victoria's waist and held her in a vice grip.

"Shhhhhh," Abbie whispered. "Just calm down, sweetie, it'll be okay. You just need to sit with Abigail for a few minutes, and then we can go to lunch together." Victoria felt herself bob up and down slightly as Abbie began to bounce her knee.

THUMP-UMP.

That's when Victoria felt it again, another "pulse" or an "aftershock".

"Shit cockles, not again," she hissed to herself. Only to be rewarded with more quiet shushing from Abbie.

THUMP-UMP!

Victoria suddenly became keenly aware of how soft Abbie Delaney's breasts were brushing against her back, and how sweet the other girl's breath smelled and how warm her body was. Victoria unconsciously spread her legs a few crucial inches and felt the firmness of Abbie's toned leg between her own.

"No no no no!" Victoria whispered, terrified to make a scene but unable to physically get herself out of this position. She grabbed Abbie's knee to try and stop it, but only succeeded in gyrating her hips, as she began grinding on the other girl's leg. She shut her eyes closed and sucked on her lips, praying to all the gods above and below that she wasn't doing what she was doing.

Sucking on her own lips wasn't helping, but in fact was just making her more frustrated. Now she was horny AND wanted to suck on something. And to make matters worse, she was finding herself increasingly aware of Abbie's presence in a way that refused to sway her from her present course of action. Whether by accident or design, the other girl's knee bouncing kept changing pace. Fast, and slow, slow and fast. It was hard to get into a rhythm, but it was also hard to tune it out for the very same reason.

Victoria just imagined herself lifting up her dress, reaching into her own panties and going to town on herself in front of the whole class. And worse yet, it increasingly felt like she wouldn't care. She clenched her fingers in stress, and thought about balling and unballing her fists to take her mind off of the stress she was feeling, but instead felt her own hands begin to rub herself through her clothes.

Was that the real reason why Lyndon Johnson wasn't shot? Was he too busy masturbating to go outside?

Sucking on her lips, eyelids still slammed shut and her senses becoming continually overwhelmed at all the wrong things, Victoria sat on her worst enemy's lap, while desperately trying to make herself cum as discreetly as possible.

So frustrated was she, and now magically lacking any common sense, she failed to remember that during and soon after these "pulses", more concrete changes were likely to occur as they did soon after her shower this morning. Her face felt burning hot and flushed, as she desperately and unsuccessfully rubbed herself and did the reverse cowgirl leg hump to Abbie

Delaney. Every part of her that mattered right now stiffened, and tingled, and throbbed, or became wet.

So inwardly focused was she, that she didn't notice the little changes that were happening all around her; like how her breasts and nipples were no longer contained by a proper bra, or how much thicker her panties were starting to feel, or how the muffled rubbing was suddenly replaced by a distinct crinkling noise. Instead of opening her eyes, Victoria just kept sucking on her lips and lightly grinding against Abbie's leg.

She felt something soft and smooth brush against her lips, and almost instinctively, Victoria's mouth puckered out and accepted the thing that was being offered. Her tongue brushed against round tasteless rubber. It must have been a gag of some sort, and the thought turned her on even more. Victoria let out a low moan.

"It's okay, baby," a now loving Abigail Delaney whispered into Victoria's ear. "Just let it aaallllll out. We'll get you cleaned up before lunch." Abbie Delaney was giving her permission to cum, it seemed, and that notion (which would have disgusted her at any other time) was all that Victoria needed to get the job done.

Electricity coursed through her body, and Victoria arched her back, leaning into Abbie's breasts. She felt Abbie's silky blonde hair brush against her ear as the back of her head made contact with Abbie's slender shoulder. She felt Abbie's lips give her a gentle peck on the cheek with a soft "Mwah".

Finally, Victoria's body let loose and shook from within as she flooded her panties, her body shaking slightly in the process. Release, oh sweet release. Soon she would be able to think clearly again.

"Mustn't scream", Victoria thought as she redoubled her efforts to suck on the ball gag that Abbie had somehow acquired and slipped into her mouth.

Victoria's eyes fluttered open and she scanned the classroom. Good. She hadn't been that loud. All eyes were on Mr. Morrison as he droned on about some mathematical formula or another. What had changed though?

Victoria looked down at her shoes, and noticed that they had gone from plain white sneakers to pink Velcro ones. Her plain white socks now had little hearts around the ankle and frilled out at the end. Her pink dress it seemed, had shortened itself to being barely longer than a t-shirt, and the belt that showed off her hips had melted into the fabric. Her legs were no longer bare either, and the black bike shorts she had slipped on earlier had elongated and transformed into some thin leggings. Most notable, though, were her panties.

Though they were still covered by the leggings, (goddamn, she hated leggings), anyone could clearly tell that she was wearing something underneath. There was a noticeable bulge in her midsection right around her crotch that made her thighs look smaller by comparison. It looked like she had gained a few pounds, all in her ass, or that she was wearing only a piece of some bizarre novelty fat suit.

Victoria lifted up her dress and noticed the thin, almost papery waist band peeking out the waistline of her leggings. Even without the slightest bit of common sense left to her, there was no denying that Victoria was wearing a disposable diaper. But why the hell was she wearing one?

Abbie's hand moved from Victoria's belly button to down in between the girl's legs. She gave Victoria's diaper a squeeze and whispered, "All done?".

A new kind of wetness started to fill Victoria's pants. Her bladder, having given her absolutely no warning or signal of fullness, had started to evacuate itself of its own accord into Victoria's newly formed Huggies.

"Oops, guess not," Abbie whispered and then giggled slightly, reasserting her grip around the other girl.

"Mmmph", Victoria moaned around the pacifier in her mouth that she had mistakenly believed was some kind of ball gag. It wasn't attached to her in any way, but she didn't have the presence of mind to spit it out. Her hands shot down to her crotch, desperately trying to stop herself from peeing. Alas, stopping the liquid flowing out into the awaiting padding was completely fruitless. The crinkling in her ears as she had rubbed herself was replaced by a quiet hissing noise that she hoped only she could hear. Finally, after far too long, the hissing stopped, and now Victoria's skin was assaulted with the sensation of her waste spreading out, yet contained entirely beneath her.

"There we go," Abbie cooed into Victoria's ear. "Now you're done. I'll get you changed in just a few minutes." She gave Victoria another quick peck on the cheek before adding "Good baby," and resumed bouncing Victoria on her knee.

Victoria was in total shock at this point. The math teacher was still droning on about mathematical formulas while the rest of the class either took notes or eagerly watched the clock. A few girls snuck glances back at Victoria, sitting in Abbie's lap. But rather than laughing or mocking her, they just put on a big bright eyed smile and waved at her while mouthing the word "Hi," as if trying to coax her to do the same back to them.

She hadn't woken up yet, that must be what was really happening. She was still in her bed at home and all of this was some bizarre nightmare. Victoria would be screaming her head off right now, swearing up a storm, but for the moment, she was beyond screaming.

The wet diaper was starting to swell and bulge out more as the padding soaked up Victoria's urine, and the quiet crinkling of earlier was now replaced with a muted squishing with every bound up and down on Abbie Delaney's knee. Victoria was instantly aware of it and disgusted with herself.

Even though the diaper was readily doing its job, and it was true that Victoria could barely feel any wetness at all, she was anything but comfortable. The warmth persisted, even if the exact feeling of wetness was being dulled. And the squishing, like a sponge in her underpants, reminded her what she didn't need to reminded of. Babies and toddlers might not know or care about the difference between pissing themselves and being dry, but Victoria was no baby. Her skin was crawling with a thousand tiny bugs coming out of the woodwork of her deepest psyche. She could never remember feeling this fundamentally unclean.

Even waking in the urine soaked bed this morning wasn't as bad as all this. Victoria had suffered that in private and it had been a relatively simple matter to peel the bedsheets off of herself and tip toe to the shower.

Now, Victoria was in public, wearing a wet, squishy, diaper, and no one was batting an eyelash. The fact that the rest of her classmates, who didn't seem to recognize her or remember her, were either oblivious or unalarmed by this only made things worse instead of better. Had they been laughing at her, she could have mustered some form of outrage or anger and turn it into strength and adrenaline so that she could break Abbie's grasp and run out of there. Instead, Abigail's little court of sheep attended to the teacher, or stared at the clock.

It was like she was in the twilight zone, and with every passing second it became harder for her to focus or make sense of the environment around her. Her mind kept coming back to the sensation of sitting and being bounced around in a wet diaper.

Up and down, up and down (squish, squish, squish,). Bouncy, bouncy, bouncy, (squish, squish, squish). Victoria squirmed feebly in Abbie's embrace. Wriggle (squish, squish), wriggle, (squish). Abbie for her part, only tangentially noticed Victoria's discomfort and starting petting Victoria's hair, shushing her, and giving her little pecks on the cheek at random intervals.

The teacher droned on, "-if you take the cosine and multiply it by the tangent-"(squish, squish, squish). "- Then, you can bounce the graviton particle beam, off the main deflector dish-" (squish, squish, squish). The clock chugged along with a "tick-tick-tick-tick" (squish, squish, squish, squish,)

After much too long, the bell finally rang and Victoria was allowed to stand up, but before she could run, Abbie's vice like grip was back on her wrist.

“Time for a diapee change,” Abbie proclaimed in a sing song voice. “Let’s go get my favorite little friend all clean.”

Victoria spit out the pacifier, watching it bounce out on the floor and finally found her voice.

“Let go of me, crazy bitch-tits psycho cock sucker!” she screamed.

“Vicky!” Abbie remarked, seemingly legitimately surprised. “Such language, baby girl! That is no way to talk to your favorite sitter!”

“You’re not my sitter, you stupid chode muff-“

Victoria suddenly found another pacifier shoved into her mouth, with Abbie Delaney holding her chin in the palm of her hand.

“Keep talking like that, little missy,” Abbie threatened Victoria, looking her in the eye, “and not only will you not get a diaper change, but I will personally spank you right on your cute little bum in front of everyone. Now, do you want that?”

Victoria shook her head “no”.

“Good” Abbie said, “Now, do you want out of that wet diaper?” The thing of it was, Victoria really did want out of that wet diaper. She nodded yes.

“Good.” Abbie told her, “Now suck on your paci, and keep it in this time.” Victoria did as she was bid. They started moving out of the classroom and into the hallway.

“We’re going to the restrooms near the front office,” Abbie informed her captive, “I think they have some changing stations there for visitors with little kids and teenage moms, or something. Then we’ll get you fed, and then call your Mommy. I bet she’s worried sick about you running off to find me like this.” Victoria just allowed herself to be dragged along. Maybe it was the magic, or the intense psychological trauma she was going through, but much of the fight had gone out of her.

For the second time today, Victoria was walking bow legged, but this time it was less a matter of choice and more a matter of physical necessity. The huge bulk of the diaper forced her legs apart. Even if the diaper had been dry and not swollen from being thoroughly used, Victoria reckoned she would still have a distinct waddle.

No wonder it took babies so long to learn to walk. Their movement was constantly being impeded by their own undergarments. Victoria was acutely aware of the weight the wet diaper had now. She could feel it sagging between her thighs with each and every step. Had she not been wearing the leggings, which kept the diaper well supported and up against her crotch and

ass- fuck you leggings- the diaper would have been drooping from the weight inside and swinging between her legs with each and every step. To add insult to infantilism, a quick glance backwards told Victoria that the back of her pants had little black ruffles on them.

All through the twisting and turning halls that she had known so well these last four years, nary a glance was cast to Victoria. A few double takes as underclassmen made sure they had seen what they thought they had seen- (and what were they seeing exactly? The most popular girl in school dragging along a toddler, or a diapered senior? Victoria guessed the former though she was clearly the latter)- a few “Hey’s” directed at Abbie and a few cartoonish “Hiiiiiii’s” directed at Victoria, but other than that not a second kind of look.

Victoria had gotten used to feeling invisible, to feeling unnoticed and unwanted, but this was a completely different feeling altogether. This wasn’t the feeling of being one of the least popular girls in school, the butt of every practical joke and social hazing ritual known to the senior class. That was a feeling of scorn and “sorry, wish we could help, but we can’t” apathy. This was a feeling of instantly being recognized, given barely a passing thought, and then filed away to be forgotten about for more important matters. This was being dismissed. This was the invisibility that came with being “little”.

“Here we are,” Abbie announced in her sing-song voice as she pushed through the Women’s Restroom Door. Victoria found herself being led to a handicapped stall. Once inside, both girls easily saw the pulldown changing table bolted to the wall.

“Score,” Abbie’s voice bounced off the linoleum tiled walls. She walked over and opened it up before turning back to her prisoner. Without so much as a warning, she released Victoria’s arm and in one swift motion, pulled Victoria’s leggings down to her shoes. Victoria could have run right there, but she doubted she’d get very far with her pants around her ankles in a puffy diaper.

“Okay, baby doll, hop on up,” Abbie patted the changing table. Seeing no other viable option, Victoria scooted over to the table, placed her back against the edge, and hopped up. There was a slight groan as she sat on the table. Though she wasn’t overweight, these types of apparatuses were definitely not intended for anyone over fifty pounds.

Then, much to Victoria’s surprise, there were more groans as the plastic table stretched, expanded and thickened to support and accommodate her. “I fuffin’ hey madjik” Victoria mumbled behind her pacifier.

“What was that, Vicky?” Abbie asked pointedly. Cowed, Victoria just shook her head.

Gently, Abbie pushed Victoria down onto the changing table, Victoria’s pants still around her ankles. Abbie reached over Victoria and pulled a strap tightly across Victoria’s chest, right below her breasts, pinning Victoria’s arms to her sides.

Abbie looked at Victoria's leggings and tsked, "These things are cute, but they'll really just get in the way." Wordlessly, Abbie slipped first the shoes, then the leggings off of her fellow senior. "It's like my Mommy said when I was little," Abbie remarked to Victoria, "pants are for the potty, dresses are for diapers."

Victoria's eyes wandered to Abbie's clothes, wondering if the spell had in fact done something to the other girl's attire. Abbie must have noticed and added, "That's only when you're little though. When you're a big girl like me, the rule is dresses are for damsels, skirts are for flirts, and pants are for pansies. People have no idea how hard it is to look like this some days."

Abbie bent over and picked up what must have been Victoria's lunch bag, now very obviously a quite bulky diaper bag; still pink, and monogrammed with the letters "V.V.". She neatly rolled up Victoria's leggings and shoes, and stuffed them into a side pocket of the bag, before opening the bag to reveal several folded diapers poking out.

They were definitely adult sized, Victoria realized as she watched Abbie have to unfold it once before it had a recognizable front and back, but they were decorated with some disturbingly familiar patterns.

"Let's see," Abbie turned the diaper over in her hands, "I can never remember. Ah here we go. Mickey and Minnie on the front, big Mickey and the tapes on the back. There was no mistaking to Victoria's eyes, the purple "Huggies" logo just above Mickey's right ear on the front picture. Her underwear hadn't been switched with Abbie's this morning, it had been morphing into rows upon rows of diapers!

This was not fair! This is not what she had wanted or wished for when she cast that spell! This was the furthest thing from it. Now she was at Abbie Delaney's mercy in some of the most intimate ways imaginable. Blood rushed to Victoria's face and she bit down on the pacifier in her mouth so hard that were it her tongue, it would have spurted blood.

Ignoring Victoria's angry shaking, Abbie reached and quickly ripped the Velcro tapes off the front of Victoria's sodden diaper. Both of their noses wrinkled as the smell of ammonia lilted into the air. The wash of cold air to her privates caused Victoria to curl her fingers in discomfort.

Abbie took out a packet of wipes and began to wipe Victoria down gently, but thoroughly. Victoria gasped and cursed under her breath as her oldest enemy dragged a cold cloth between her legs and gently wiped the insides of her thighs.

"Butt up, sweetie," Abbie told Victoria, and Victoria's body obeyed almost of its own accord, and her legs lifted up to the ceiling so that she was now giving Abbie a good view of her rump. Victoria blushed and sucked on the paci harder as Abbie whipped clean the cheeks of her ass. "So much," Abbie remarked.

Victoria, heard more than felt the old diaper being slid out from under her and being balled up and tossed away. Then she heard the new diaper being unfolded and slid underneath her.

“Okay, down.”

Victoria’s body obeyed and her backside plopped down on the thick, dry padding. Finally, Abbie grabbed the front of the oversized Huggies and pulled it up over Victoria’s hips, taping one side, and then the other.

“All better,” Abbie declared, giving the front of the diaper a satisfied pat. It was better than a wet diaper, for sure, but not by much.

Abbie unbuckled Victoria from the changing table and helped her off. Rather than let her down though, Victoria found herself being carried, rather uncomfortably by Abbie.

“Ooomph, you’re getting heavy, kiddo. Next time, bring your stroller.” Victoria clearly didn’t seem light to Abbie, but Abbie didn’t seem to mind.

“Lemme go!” Victoria protested. “Goddamnit, lemme go!” Though she beat on Abbie’s back, Abbie didn’t seem to notice. Was it the magic, or was Abbie just that much tougher than her?

Victoria found herself slung over Abbie’s shoulder and being carried out of the women’s restroom, through the halls, through the school courtyard and into the cafeteria. All the while, she was screaming, kicking, crying, and cursing with her new diaper on full display for anyone that wanted to get a peek of a smiling Mickey Mouse.

“Someone is a grumpy girl today,” was all that Abbie could be bothered to say.

Victoria’s cries and protests were drowned out by the white noise of the cafeteria. Her screams were just another noise in the crowded room. Abbie heaved Victoria down into a nearby wooden chair, which creaked and groaned as it stretched and twisted into a cheap restaurant high chair. It was the kind that had virtually no back support, but kept her torso and legs contained. She was trapped from the waist down, ensnared in wood. No one else seemed to notice or care about the change.

To make matters more embarrassing, Victoria‘s dress had slid up slightly during her transport, and now the ends of her were covering the rim of the highchair instead of her rump. Anyone who looked could clearly see that the girl was diapered.

“Let me go, Abbie, now!” Victoria demanded.

“Gotta get you some lunch first, baby,” Abbie said, rummaging around in the diaper bag, “then we’ll find your Mommy.” From the diaper bag, Abbie withdrew plastic tubs of applesauce, pureed banana chunks, and something green; most likely mashed green beans. Yuck!

As she continued to rummage around in the diaper bag, a couple of Abbie’s “friends” came up. In Victoria’s mind, girls like Abbie didn’t really have friends, just minions. Like Abbie, they were dressed up like blonde fashionista’s; practically clones of Abbie. Had God (or more likely, the Devil) held auditions for the part of Abbie Delaney, both of these girls would have been in the final screen tests. They basically looked like two actors dressed up for the same part. The only difference was the slight difference in their hair color. Victoria mentally labeled them “bleach blonde” and “dirty blonde”.

“Hi Abigail,” dirty blonde greeted, “who’s the little cutey?”

“This is Vicky,” Abbie gestured to Victoria without looking up out of the bag. “I babysit her on the weekends.

“No you don’t, Abbie,” Victoria vehemently shook her head. “We’re not even friends, you fucking bitch,” she spat.

“Dang,” bleach blonde remarked nonchalantly, “kid’s got a mouth on her.”

“Eh, she doesn’t really know what she’s saying.” Abbie shrugged it off. “Frankly, I’m surprised she’s talking at all. Aha! Found it!” Abbie pulled out a spoon with a plastic head.

“What’s she doing here?” bleach blonde asked. “This isn’t a daycare.”

“Not sure really,” Abbie said as she continued rummaging around in Victoria’s diaper bag. Still not paying much attention.

“I go to this school,” Victoria said flatly. Bleach blonde and dirty blonde giggled a bit, but otherwise ignored Victoria. “No seriously,” Victoria pressed, “You pelted me with chicken nuggets just last week.” She pointed at dirty blonde.

“Every now and then, her mom brings her by to have lunch with me,” Abbie told her cronies, completely ignoring Victoria. “Frankly, I think the woman is hopeless and couldn’t handle this kid without me. Seriously, woman is a total loser, and I suspect she drops Vicky off once a month so she can go day drink in the parking lot for thirty minutes or something.”

“Don’t you talk about my mom, you skank!” Victoria snapped.

Abbie ignored Victoria and talked over her protests, “I bet that’s where her mom is right now actually. Probably came to school drunk and let little Vicky wander around school to find me.”

She turned her attention to Victoria and said in a squeaky baby talk voice, “Of course, if I were your Mommy, I might day drink too.” She tickled a finger under Victoria’s chin. “Yes I would! Yes I would!” Victoria feebly swatted Abbie’s hand away and Abbie went back to digging in the diaper bag for something.

“But, the money’s good,” Abbie concluded, “I don’t mind babysitting, and the kids can actually be fun when you get to give them back at the end. Well, crap.”

“What?” both bleach blonde and dirty blonde asked in unison.

“I can’t find a bib to feed her with, and I don’t want to get her little dress dirty.” Abbie informed all of them. Then Abbie looked at her two drones. “Take her dress off for me.”

“Abbie?” Victoria asked in complete shock of the command as Abbie’s two mini-me’s walked over and grabbed ahold of Victoria’s dress.

“Abbie, no, stop!” she yelled in vain as bleach blond and dirty blond started to yank the dress up over Victoria’s head. “STOOOOP! STOP STOP STOP!” Victoria screamed at the top of her lungs. “HEEEEEEEEELP!” Eyes in the cafeteria, started to settle in on Victoria. She wasn’t invisible anymore, and there was a low rumble of concern in the cafeteria.

“I’m her babysitter,” Abbie called out. “She’s just fussy, and doesn’t want to take off her dress so she can eat her veggies,” Abbie calmly explained out loud before anyone could bother to rush over and help the poor girl. Immediately everyone went about their business. A few nodded and smiled an “I’ve been there before” grin before going back to their lunches. Victoria was invisible again. Abbie meanwhile, worked on peeling back the lid on the first tub of baby food.

“Abbiiiieee!” Victoria shrieked as her dress finally came free, leaving her completely naked save for the oversized Huggies she sat in. “FUCK, FUCK, DAMNIT, FUCK NUTTER, SHIT, COCK SUCKER, FUCK!” Victoria crossed her arms to cover her exposed breasts.

WHOOMF!

Abbie jabbed a spoon right into Victoria’s open, cursing, mouth. Victoria swallowed, half out of surprise and half on some misguided instinct. Ugh! That was awful. How do you mess up green beans like that?

When Victoria opened her mouth to stick her tongue out in disgust, Abbie Delaney slammed another spoonful of the disgusting green mush into Victoria’s mouth. Oh god! Victoria winced and cringed in revulsion. Was this what being a baby bird was like? Did someone pre chew some green beans, swallow them, and then vomit them back up into a plastic container? That’s

sure what it tasted like. Victoria weakly spit the disgusting mush out of her mouth, only to have it dribble onto her naked breasts.

“Fuck you, Abbie,” Victoria huffed. “Fuck you.”

“Hey, Abigail,” dirty blonde spoke up, “why does she keep calling you Abbie?”

“I think it’s because she can’t say Abigail yet,” Abbie said, while trying to maneuver another spoon towards Victoria’s now sealed lips. “It’s not like she knows my loser sister.”

Victoria’s ears perked up. Sister? Abbie Delaney had a sister?

“Where is Abbie, anyways?” bleach blond asked. “The cafeteria smells less pathetic with her not around.”

Abbie stopped trying to spoon feed Victoria and the queen bee looked at her two worker drones.

“Oh, you’ll love this one,” Abbie smirked, “This morning, the freak wet the bed and would only talk in baby babble! Wouldn’t even dress or bathe herself, and she just started crying. It’s hilarious!” Then she cooed to Victoria, “Vicky’s not the only one who needs diapers, is she? "Is she?”

“Yeah,” both of her henchwomen agreed in unison.

“It’s such a shame she has almost the same name as you,” dirty blonde added. “Why’d that happen anyways?”

“Because, Abigail is a family name on my mother’s side,” Abbie explained, “but my father’s side was the side with the brains. So when my mom had two girls, one of us became ‘Abigail’ and the other one became ‘Abbie’.”

“So you’re both named Abigail?” bleach blonde asked, “How weird.”

Abbie Delany rolled her eyes. “No, you idiots. I’m Abigail Delaney. My sister is Abbie Delaney. Like that’s not a nickname; on her birth certificate it says ‘Abbie Delaney’. On mine it says ‘Abigail’.”

“That’s a shame,” dirty blonde said.

“Yeah,” bleach blonde agreed. “She ruined a perfectly good nickname by existing. I think you’d make a cute Abbie if you wanted to, Abigail.”

“I know,” Abbie nodded, “that stupid cunt did to the name ‘Abbie’ what Hitler did for ‘Adolf’.”

“Oh my god!” Victoria realized. “I switched lives with the wrong Abbie Delaney! I switched lives with a baby!”

WHOOMF. A third spoonful of awful tasting green mush slid down Victoria’s throat.

She had said the wrong name. Victoria had said the wrong name! That’s why she was in this mess. She had meant to switch lives with Abigail, not Abbie! Victoria hadn’t even known that Abigail had had a baby sister, much less one with nearly the exact name. But in her hubris and complete lack of common sense, she hadn’t bothered to anticipate that or even enunciate! It’s like if Lyndon B. Johnson had cast the spell and said “Jack Kennedy”, instead of “John Fitzgerald Kennedy.” He wouldn’t be president, somebody named “Jack Kennedy” on their birth certificate would have been assassinated instead and he’d have been fucked into a life of mediocrity.

Victoria had to do something to make this right, but what? With little in the way of ideas and not much in the way of resources, Victoria did the only thing she could. She started coughing as hard as she could, and scrunching up her face in pain.

“Oh, what’s wrong, Vicky?” Abigail Delaney asked, her voice full of concern.

“Feeeeeel siiiiick!” Victoria whined between coughs. She was trying to trigger her gag reflex.

“You poor thing,” Abigail cooed. She began to help Victoria out of the high chair, aiding Victoria in unthreading her legs and helping Victoria climb down to the floor. Her vice-like grip was still on one of Victoria’s arms and Victoria knew that she could not escape as long as Abbie was focused on her. Fortunately, she had a plan.

Right as she was being lifted out of the high chair, Victoria felt her stomach lurch and something work its way up. Yes! Victory!

“BLARGLE!” Victoria gurgled, as the disgusting green mush she had swallowed came back up to see the light of day, all while mixed with a healthy dose of stomach acid. Her green vomit splashed onto Abigail Delaney’s perfect blouse.

“Ewww….gross!” Abigail screamed, releasing Victoria from her iron grip so that she could properly recoil in disgust. Abigail’s two cronies immediately rushed to their leader’s side to comfort her and grab napkins to wipe the horrid stuff off.

Victoria took the opportunity and sprinted, clad only in a diaper, with green mush on her breasts and a bit of spit-up on her chin out of the cafeteria, through the courtyard, into the halls, and then out of the school. Between the element of surprise and the scene Abigail was making, no one was aware enough to try and stop her.

Victoria ran almost naked, barefoot, and afraid, for a block and half to what used to be Hanselmann's; too panicked to even cover her breasts. Her adrenaline was such that she didn't even register the hot pavement beneath her feet. Still, her gait was impaired from the thick padding between her legs, and so she didn't sprint as much as she fast waddled.

By the grace of God or just dumb luck, no police officer, or passerby in a vehicle was witness, and so no one tried to stop her. The bell dinged as she threw open the door and ran into Professor Bumble's shop. It looked just as empty as it had yesterday.

"Professor!" she called. "Help!"

The old coot popped up from behind the counter, still clad in the same ridiculous mismatched outfit and top hat from yesterday

"Welcome dear customer," he called out, "to Professor Bumble's Very Humble Ice Cream Shop aaaaand-", he stopped and took a look at Victoria. "Oh dear!"

"Yeah!" Victoria exclaimed, letting her current situation speak for itself.

"Um…Victoria, my dear," Professor Bumble said, "you did not inform me that your terrible arch enemy was…a baby."

"She's not!" Victoria shrieked. "I fucked up the spell and said the wrong name!"

"Clearly," Professor Bumble agreed.

They both just stood there for a tense moment. Neither one speaking.

"Well?" Victoria spoke up.

"Well what?" the old man asked.

"Aren't you going to help me fix it?" Victoria asked pleadingly.

"I'm sorry my dear," Bumble shook his head, "but like I said yesterday: No refunds. That spell is stuck inside you until you get another one to push it out. But on the bright side, that spell will technically wear off in about 17 to 18 years. Just think of it as a new opportunity. No more mean girl in your life, and in a few years you'll be the smartest girl in Kindergarten. That's a silver lining, isn't it?" He smiled awkwardly.

"Please," Victoria begged, falling to her knees. "Let me buy another one. A different spell."

The magician shook his head. “I’m sorry, my dear, but I just don’t have the heart to do that to you. I must take payment immediately, I’m almost certain that you have no money in your possession, and I don’t think I could take anything else away from you that wouldn’t be detrimental.”

“PLEASE!” Victoria cried hysterically. “I don’t want this to happen! I don’t want to have to grow up all over again! Just give me the cheapest spell you have and I’ll pay it. I don’t care what it is. JUST GIVE ME ANYTHING.” She broke down into bawling sobs.

Professor Bumble sighed and then said, “The customer is always right. If you insist.” He took off his hat and reached into it, taking out a thin paper scroll. He knelt down to get to Victoria’s eye level.

“The price for this spell is the price of lost opportunity,” he told a quietly crying Victoria. “If you cast this spell, you and I will never be able to do any further business…forever. Not counting ice cream,” he added. “You can always stop by for ice cream.”

“O-okay.” Victoria agreed, beginning to regain composure. Finally, this would be over. Professor Bumble unfurled the scroll and held it out to her. In plain black letters were the words “Happily Ever After.”

Victoria placed her palm on the scroll and sniffled. She took a deep breath, and then shouted “HAPPILY! EVER! AFTER!” making sure to enunciate each word. She wasn’t going to screw up this time.

The words on the page flickered briefly, and then vanished from the page. Victoria felt a slight tickle inside her and a slight twitter in her heart, like she had just seen a cute boy and had a single dirty thought. She breathed a sigh of belief. Finally, it was over. Then the flood came.

Victoria’s diaper started warming again. She glanced down and saw the padding in the diaper start to swell and become discolored. Why was she wetting her diaper again? Why was she still in a diaper?

“What’s happening?” Victoria shrieked.

“It appears you’re wetting your diaper, my dear,” the magician stated the obvious.

“But why? Didn’t the spell work?”

“Oh, it worked perfectly,” Professor Bumble said, a sad look on his face. “That was a Happily Ever After spell. You’re only supposed to cast it when everything in your life is just the way you want it, and the spell makes it so that nothing about your life ever changes. That’s why it’s the

cheapest and the price is banishment. Most people who cast it have already bought something from me, and they wouldn't be coming back anyway."

"But that's not what I wanted!' Victoria whined, already beginning to shift uncomfortably in the wet mass.

"Yes, but you insisted on the cheapest spell, and that you didn't care," the old man shrugged. "So I gave you what you asked for. The customer is always right. Funny thing," he added, "if you had had any common sense at all, you could have just asked me for the free sample beehive hairdo. You would have had a hideous haircut, but you would have been out of diapers."

"So now I'm going to have to grow up all over again?" Victoria whined.

"Oh no, you're not going to grow up, now." Professor Bumble wagged his finger at her. "That spell makes it so that nothing about your life changes. And I mean nothing. You're going to spend the rest of your life treated as an overgrown infant. "

"Noooo!" Victoria wailed! She grabbed onto Professor Bumbles legs for dear life and just clutched them, dripping tears onto his wingtip shoes.

"Look," Professor Bumble said, patting the poor girl on the back, "if it's any comfort, you'll have plenty of time to come to accept your new life; or you'll go insane and regress. Either way, I can promise you won't be as miserable as you are right now." Victoria kept bawling, grabbing onto the man's ankles. "This is getting terribly awkward if I can be perfectly honest. Look, I….I'll… I will give you a lift home." The magician snapped his fingers and-

"VICTORIA VALLENCOURT! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, BABY GIRL?!"

Victoria's eyes shot open. That was her mother's voice! She looked around, confused. She was standing on the doorstep of her house, with nothing but a diaper covering her and reeking of piss. At the door, in all of her worry, panic, love and maternal glory, was Victoria's mother.

"Do you have any idea how worried you made me?!" she embraced her daughter tightly. "I was so worried! I've been searching all over the neighborhood for you! Your sitter, Abigail called and told me you made it all the way to the high school. I was about to call the police!"

"I'm sorry Mommy," Victoria said meekly into her mother's shoulder. "I won't do that again."

"No you won't," Victoria's mother agreed. "Mommy's going to put child locks on all the doors so that you never run away and get lost again!" Victoria's mother pulled pack and looked down at the discolored mass clinging to Victoria's hips. "Oh my goodness, you are just soaked to the bone, little girl. Let's go get that diaper changed."

“Yes Mommy,” was all that Victoria tearfully said as she was led inside the house and into her room. As expected, a large crib was where her bed used to be, and her dresser had transmogrified into a giant changing table filled with matching diapers with Mickey and Minnie printed on them where her panties used to be, and a big closet filled with frilly baby dresses where her regular clothes once were.

Victoria let herself be guided onto the changing table and hopped up, sticking her thumb into her mouth as her mom reached across and pulled a safety strap over her chest. As her mother reached for the tapes on the wet padding between her legs and started what would be the second of a countless number of diaper changes in her future, Victoria sucked on her thumb and muttered a single word:

“Damn.”

The End

Retrospective: The hardest part of these retrospectives is so many little thoughts and bits of memory pop up as I’m writing them and I’m never sure how much is filler and how much is blather.

I do remember that Life Swap was one of the first Cushypen Stories I wrote during my trial period (the other two being Addiction and Interview with The Baby) but I think it was one of the last one’s published.

As I’m sure I’ve said before (and if not, here it is), I wrote all three of those stories within the span of three months like I was a man possessed. I had been told that my stories needed 6,000 word count minimum at the time and something in my competitive nature and wordy mother fuckin’ brain led me to blow that out of the water with all three pieces.

The thing is, I had written those within three months, and I had expected them all to be published within three months.

All of a sudden, the people at Cushypen “remembered” to tell me that there had been a word max too. (Years later I found out that there hadn’t been...they’d made it for me right there on the spot.) And that my stories could be chopped up and posted into separate parts.

So that’s what happened. Interview got chopped up. Having enough material, Addiction got posted off of Cushypen, and I kept Life Swap in Safe Keeping for when I needed a break. Ta-da!

Something that I love about both Addiction and Life Swap is their secondary characters. Both have recurring characters. For Addiction it was Lucy and Levi, my favorite villains.

For Life Swap it was good ol' Professor Bumble (very humble though he might be.)

When I was a kid I watched a Nickelodeon show called Are You Afraid Of The Dark, a low budget kids' horror show (because Nickelodeon...duh). They also had recurring characters.

One of them was this strange little hack of a magic shop owner named Sardo (Pronounced sar-DOH). He had this little quirk about him where everyone called him Mr. Sardo (pronounced SAR-doh), and he would correct them. "It's sar-DOH! No Mister. Accent on the O."

And the bit with Sardo was that he was a complete conman and hack who kept accidentally selling sinister magical items to his protagonist customers and being absolutely useless when he tried to fix it, often meeting the same Twilight Zone Lite fate as the main characters.

Alternatively there was Dr. Vink. He was more sinister. Nine out of ten times he was the one GIVING the Twilight Zone ending. He didn't own a magic shop, but his profession and locale changed from appearance to appearance. Sometimes he was a chef. Sometimes he was a hermit scientist. Other times he was a retired film maker or owned a barber shop.

Like Sardo though he had certain recognizable eccentricities. For example, upon hearing his name the first time, the protagonist of the episode would always mispronounce it. "Dr. Fink?"

"VINK! With a Vuh-vuh-vuh!" was always the reply.

And within the same episode two characters would whisper behind his back that he was "some kind of nutbag".

To which Vink would not seem to hear but after giving away some helpful (deadly) exposition, he'd then say, "And I am NOT a nutbag".

If you're reading some of these quirks, you might be noticing some parallels to a certain Magician (NOT a clown).

The most fun part about writing the good Professor is I get to dip my toe in magic outside of ABDL applications. For example in the above story, offhandedly mentioning that LBJ

was president before JFK and did a little magic to switch their fates. That's kind of dark and unrelated to the plot in general, but it was worth it.

-Personalias