



Llewellyn handed the joint to Baxter Lepage, who took a toke, held the smoke in, nodded then exhaled, a stream of bluish smoke unrolling from his mouth, rising and dispersing toward the ceiling, which was completely covered by the sagging bubble of a rainbow parachute. “Weed is so much stronger than it used to be,” he said.

He handed the joint back to Llewellyn. She took another toke. The two of them were propped up against the backboard to her bed, the smell of sex heavy in the air along with the weed, the smell of her sandalwood incense. Baxter looked around the smoke hazy room— dozens of dream catchers hung along the walls, dangled in front of the windows. There was a statue of the Buddha missing a nose. A cat slunk along the back wall as if stalking prey, but it mainly seemed to have become fascinated with a beam of late afternoon sunlight cutting through the window.

Llewellyn got up and stretched. She was naked, young, completely unashamed of her body. She walked across the room, opened the fridge and grabbed a beer, twisted off the top and raised the bottle, gulping down half the bottle, some of the suds dripped from her mouth and dribbled down her breasts.

She saw Baxter watching her and smiled. “What?”

“I just admire you so much,” Baxter said. “You’re so free. No responsibilities. No stress. No worrying about keeping up with the Joneses. How do you do it?”

Llewellyn wandered back over to the bed, handed Baxter the bottle of beer. He sipped, looking at her face, her eyes. There was some kind of energy there, a spark, maybe a hint of madness. It drove him wild. “The thing is,” she said, slitting her eyes, “you just do it. That’s all.”

“It’s not that easy,” Baxter said.

“It really is.”

“For you, maybe. But, you know, I have bills to pay. Alimony to my bitch of an ex. It’s complicated.”

“It’s not. No. It isn’t. You just need to stop being scared.”

Baxter sat up. “Scared? I’m not scared.”

“Then come with me,” Llewellyn said. “Right now. I’ll show the shadowy alleyways, the dark places of broken things.”

She held out her hand. Baxter was about to say no, I can't, I have to work tomorrow, big day in court and all that, but it seemed like the room tilted for a moment, and when it tilted back, he found himself reaching out, taking Llewellyn's hand and whispering, "Zazz me."

Annie, his ex-wife, laughed. She had watched the whole thing using the scrying stone she'd gotten from Tatiana the Fixer, who assured her she would be able to change and control her ex-husband, turn him into anything she wanted. It had seemed insane, impossible, but it now seemed totally real. She'd planted the idea for him to say "zazz me" in his mind, and she'd planted ideas in the mind of both him and Llewellyn that he needed to "be free."

She seethed with rage as she looked over Llewellyn's lean young body, hating her ex not only because he'd dumped her for a younger woman, but because he'd replaced her with that type. Annie had turned herself into a Stepford Wife for him, giving up all her own hope and dreams to become a suburban, stay at home mother. Now he was smoking weed and acting like some kind of bohemian after telling her he found her boring. Hmmpf.

"You want a manic pixie dream girl?" She thought as she watched the two of them getting dressed. "Maybe you should be one?"

Clubs, drinking, lights flashing. Baxter and Llewellyn dancing and laughing. They'd been sitting at a small table in some dingy basement club, a DJ standing on the stage, spinning some sort of throbbing, hypnotic trance music. Smirking, Llewellyn had whispered in the ear of the guy sitting next to her, and the man had fished some pills out of his pockets and dropped them into a martini glass. Llewellyn had brought it around the table and lifted it to Baxter's lips. "What are the pills?" He'd asked, eyeing the red and white capsules floating in the sparkling gin.

"Freedom," Llewellyn had said, tilting the glass back. Baxter had drank, swallowed the pills. It felt like the world had bent, expanded, the sound of the music became stretched, distorted like it was being broadcast through a broken bell. He and Llewellyn were dancing, and he'd suddenly shouted "The colors! I've never seen the colors!"

Later, brighter lights, but soft lights. Baxter looked at himself in the mirror while a woman with a sharp, pointy face like a shark jabbed a needle in his nose. "I didn't feel a thing," Baxter laughed while the woman slipped a nose ring into the hole she'd made. Baxter turned his head slightly, watching as the light glittered off his nose ring, the ring in his lower lip, the one in his right eyebrow.

Llewelyn's face appeared in the mirror behind him. She was smiling, that mad gleam in her eyes even more intense than before. "Your client is going to be so pissed," she said.

"Who gives a fuck?" Baxter had said. Llewellyn gave him a kiss on the cheek, then patted him on the shoulder. "That's the spirit."

Annie laughed, seeing her husband with his edgy piercings. It's going to be one hell of a hangover she thought, when my manic pixie dream dork wakes up tomorrow.

Later, Baxter sitting in a chair, looking at himself in the mirror. A girl was twisting pieces of tinfoil into his hair.

"Ya sure?" She said.

"Yeah," Baxter had said, feeling wild, out of control, free. More free than he'd ever felt. "Make it pink."

Back out onto the streets. A spotlight cutting the sky. Clouds high above the buildings, Baxter stood in the middle of the street looking up at the skyscrapers, the rows of windows, most of them still lit. "What are you doing with your lives?" He screamed. "Wake up and live!"

Baxter woke, the events of the night before like a blurry dream. His head hurt. His tongue tasted like rancid butter. His face and ears throbbed. Llewellyn, who was snoring next to him, curled into a ball, had pulled the shades, but there was a sliver of bright, morning sunlight sneaking under the blinds. What time is it even? Baxter wondered. Looking at his wrist, he squinted and then shouted, "Fuck!" He was due in court in less than an hour.

"Rude," Llewellyn moaned, pulling her pillow over her head.

Baxter jumped out of bed. "Shitty shoot poop poop!" He said, confused where that stupid sounding phrase had come from, but too panicked to give it much thought. He found his phone and called for a Zoober, then pulled on his pants, his shirt and suit jacket. The whole time he was dressing, he kept hearing a delicate jangling sound, and wondered what the hell it was, only to find out when he went to the mirror to check his hair and once more screamed. He meant to shout Fuck again, but instead heard himself shout "Cluckity Cluck a Duck!"

His weird new lingo might have disturbed him more if he had not found himself staring at what to his morning eyes looked like a train wreck of his face. He had gotten piercings. Multiple piercings. His lip. Eyebrow. Nose. He felt something cold and heavy inside his mouth, and opening his mouth he saw he had a tongue piercing as well. He even had earrings at the top and bottom of his ears, little chains linking them, which were the source

of the quiet jangling. And, just in case that wasn't enough, his hair was now bubble-gum pink.



Baxter felt himself gripped with shame and terror. He was not the kind of man who would get these piercings. He was the kind of man who made fun of people who had piercings. More importantly, his client was not the kind of man who would appreciate his lawyer showing up looking like some punk rock reject from the 1980s. He'd have to remove them and just hope the holes weren't too noticeable. He reached for the hoop in his nose, turned it, thinking to take it out, but when he went to unclasp it, his fingers froze, his hands shook. He couldn't. He wanted to, needed to, but he couldn't.

His phone dinged. His Zoober was about to arrive. Shit. Shit. He didn't have time. He could smell himself—sweat, booze, three different flavors of weed, so he grabbed a bottle of Lew's perfume—it would have to do—sprayed it in the air, stepped into the cloud, than ran out, hurrying downstair, his earrings jangling with every step.

Once he was in the Zoober, he texted the clerk of the court requesting to reschedule. Then struggled once more to remove his piercings. No go. He simply couldn't do it. Texts were coming in from his client now—Henderson Upshot, a big time Wall Street money man—asking him where the hell he was—Baxter texted back—traffic. On my way.

The request to reschedule was denied. As the Zoober pulled up to the courthouse, Baxter looked at himself in his phone with his pink hair and piercings. Shit. He was out of time. If he walked into court looking like this, word would get around legal circles in the city. His reputation would be destroyed. If he ditched, he thought, his reputation would also be destroyed.

Still, he lingered in the Zoober for a minute, considering it. He had some money in the bank, a little hidden in the Caymans. He could just go, get away from all of this. But then, he thought of something Lew always said. "Whenever I have to make a decision," she said. "I always make the choice that seems crazy."

Yes. Yes, he decided. That's what he would do. He got out of the Zoober and marched into



the court room. "I've talked my way out of worse situations," he thought. "I'll talk my way out of this one." Indeed, he instantly had an idea, and it was soooo obvious.

Baxter pushed both of the double doors to the court room open and strode in, chin out, shoulders back. He liked to make a big, bold, aggressive entrance, and he felt good about that, but suddenly he felt all bubbly and silly and without any thought, he smiled, rose up on his tippy toes and twirled.

April Essex, and his client, the previously mentioned Henderson Upshot, craned their necks around, and both of their faces registered total shock. The look on Henderson's face turning rapidly evolving into rage. The attorney for the other side, Penny Offutt, smirked, thinking maybe Baxter had come to court high on something. She was, however, impressed with his pirouette. His form had been perfect, right down to his ballet fingers. She silently applauded while at the same time hoping his weird behavior was going to hand her a win in what was, she felt, not a great case.

Baxter, confused and embarrassed by his ballet move and beginning to think he'd gone insane, regained his composure, checked his cufflinks and marched to the litigator's table.

"What the hell?" Upshot said staring in horror at the weird thing he now had as a lawyer. "I hired a lawyer, not a prancing pincushion."

"Bax, what?" April said.

Baxter sat and leaned over so he could whisper to Upshot. "I did this to help you win your Kooky case," he said. *Kooky?*

"Bullcrap."

"Wait till you see the judge." It had been his inspiration to try and convince Henderson he'd gotten the work done as a part of his strategy.

The bailiff announced the judge: Esther Stein. She walked into the courtroom with her nose stud and purple hair. Henderson looked over at Baxter and smiled, then whispered, "You sneaky son of a bitch."

Baxter tugged on his earring and smiled. Court happened. Judge Stein didn't seem to even notice Baxter's new look, though she'd seen him in her courtroom many times. Henderson seemed content as he headed off to make more money, shaking Baxter's hand and whispering, "when you said you'd go to any lengths to win this thing, you weren't kidding."

Maybe, Baxter thought, gently rubbing his finger against his lip ring, there's something to Llewellyn's whole live free approach to life.

Penny, the rival lawyer, approached. "I love your hair, counselor," she said.

"What about my jewelry?" Baxter answered, having to decided to brazen it all out.

"Oh, you look adorable. I hope you don't think this new look is going to sway judge Stein. She isn't that gullible."

"I didn't do this for her," Baxter said. "It's a statement of who I am." As those words left his mouth, he shivered. It was, he realized, on some deep level, the truth now.

After, he and April paused out in the hall. “Well, you managed to placate Henderson, but you didn’t fool me. What the hell is this?”

“It’s a long story involving a lot of booze,” Baxter said, gingerly touching his lip ring. “I guess I’m stuck with this for now, though.” He could tell the energy between he and April had changed, and he didn’t like it. She’d had a crush on him since she started working at the firm and had always been a little in awe of him, a little flirty. That was gone now. He decided to reset the paradigm. “Let’s get a drink.”

“It’s a little early, and I need to get back to the office,” she said, clearly turned off. Baxter was about to insist when a pair of portly lawyers from a third-rate firm walked by and looked Baxter over. They shook their heads in disgust and one of them mumbled, “freak.”

“What a couple of jerky werkies,” Baxter said, his hand going right to his mouth as he was once again embarrassed by his weird new lingo, especially when he was just trying to re-establish himself as a bad ass man to this little woman. “Sorry. That’s so weird,” he said, knowing he was making it worse, but unable to stop himself.

“You got that right,” April thought. “See you at the office?” Any started walking away.

Baxter’s exotic look and behavior made her feel weird, awkward. She just wanted to get



away from him. And, besides, she couldn’t wait to dish about his new piercing fetish.

“No. I’ve got some errands to run,” he said. April left. Baxter stood, tugging on his earring as he thought about what to do. If he could have seen himself, he would have realized his facial expression—crooked little smile, raised eyebrows, eyes to the side, was the same one Llewellyn made when she was thinking. He’d always found it so cute.

Now that he’d lied about the reason for his new look, he

Cooper Kadee

was kind of stuck, but maybe he could at least cover his head and maybe get the piercings



removed so he only had to wear them to court?

He yawned. He was so tired. Maybe he could swing by his apartment first and take a quick nap, he thought, as he extended his arms out to the sides, slightly bent his wrists and did another twirl.

As he walked along the sidewalks on his way home, Baxter got a lot of looks and even some snickering comments. He'd practically been born in a suit, and as a suit, he'd always largely blended into mainstream society, so he'd never been subjected to this kind of ridicule from the normals. It made him feel shaken, off-balance, and yet, at the same time, he would sometimes pass someone with purple hair or piercings, someone dressed in off-beat clothes or with many visible tats, and there was a kind of look of recognition, a glance, a small nod.

He was part of the underground now, he realized with a strange sense of pride. He'd have to tell Lew. Just as that thought crossed his mind, he saw a sign painted on a storefront window: eyebrows threaded. Without a thought he wandered into the salon and was soon down to get his eyebrows done. Of course, part of him couldn't understand what he was doing, why he was doing, but sitting with his legs crossed at the knee, his hands folded in his lap, he couldn't deny that it all just felt right.

The staff, everyone, just treated him like any customer. This was, after all, New Amsterdam and, besides, he figured with his piercings it wouldn't be at all odd that he would want to have his brows done. When the girl finished, he cringed. He now had slender, arched eyebrows like a fashionable woman.

I guess I can expect more snickering, he thought, running his finger along his sleek brow. Well, fine. He was a free spirit and would do what he wanted.

When he got home, he collapsed onto the couch, exhausted. He tossed. He tossed again. He turned. "I'm too tired to sleep," he realized. "Hey, Giri, play..." his wife made a change in his musical tastes... "Rriot Grrrrls."

"Now playing Riot Girl punk rock," Giri responded.

Wait, what? Baxter thought, wondering what he'd been thinking. He never liked punk—too messy, too imperfect, and girl punk? Yet, as soon as it started playing, he found himself nodding along, smiling. "I'm so quirky," he thought as he began to dance, throwing a bunch of Breakfast Club dance moves, bopping around his apartment, his arms in the air, then racing to his smart pad, ordering candles and incense, and then dancing some more, biting his lip, feeling rebellious and free.

Later, he did manage to fall asleep, and as he slept his ex-wife, Annie, decided to give him a signature traumatic memory, since all Manic Pixies had some sort of trauma in their background. She spent a little time thinking about it, giggling at how ridiculous it was, how funny it would be when he revealed his "trauma" for the first time. Then, for good measure, she added a quirky allergy.

Good... good... she thought, yawning, thinking she would go to bed, get up early to watch him deal with all the changes, but then on a whim she decided he should have freckles. He'd always had a weird thing for freckles, and then she changed his eye color to green as well, just because she could. That was enough, she thought but then, well, why not give him a little bit longer hair, too? She smirked as Baxter's pink hair grew out, forming a messy bob, now purple and pink. "Don't you just look adorable," she said to her husband's sleeping image.

Baxter tossed and turned all night, his dreams haunted by his new traumatic memory. "Fin..." he whispered... "Fin, don't leave me..."

He woke curled up into a ball, drowning in emotional agony more terrible than anything he'd ever felt before. "Damn... damn... damn..." he whispered. "Fin. Oh, Fin."

He was exhausted from his troubled sleep and didn't even notice he had to brush bangs out of his eyes as he got up. He stumbled into the shower, but when he reached for his usual Irish Lava bodywash he found something called She Coconut and Hibiscus illuminating body wash. He squirted a little in his palm and sniffed. It most definitely smelled like girl shit. He started to put it aside, but then he noticed the bottle also promised him radiant skin. "Girl smell be damned," he whispered as he lathered up. "I'm so damn quirky these days," he thought as the perfumy smell of female seeped into his skin.

After he showered, Baxter went to the sink as he'd been doing every day since he'd become a teenager and prepared to shave. As soon as he saw his face, his mouth fell open. Everything was wrong. Purple and pink bangs cascaded down over one eye. His hair now came down to his jaw line, and he had freckles? Freckles? Purple hair, green eyes, freckles, all of that shook him, but the smooth, hairless skin on his face rattled him to his core. Shaving had made him a man. It had been a part of that identity since he first scraped off a few wispy hairs from his upper lip as a boy. Now, he put a hand to his soft, smooth cheek, feeling not even the hint of stubble. His face was smooth as any woman's, and it had taken on a more feminine look. At first he wasn't sure why he looked more like a woman, but as he gaped at himself he saw it was plumps, a dainty nose, long lashes.

"As smooth as any woman's" He murmured, tracing his fingertips over his baby soft cheek. Did he have a hormonal imbalance? Was that why he was acting so weird? He put his hands over his chest terrified it would feel soft, like he was budding young breasts, but it was hard as always, thanks to hours doing pushups, lifting weights. The rest of him looked okay, but from the neck up? I need to see a shrink, he decided. Something is most seriously wrong with my brain.

He couldn't go to work like this, he decided. No way. His reputation would be ruined. His boss, Powers was all about old-school alphas, hard drinker assholes who would fuck anything or anyone. He was into guys with pink hair and freckles. Baxter went to his phone



thinking to call in, but he saw a text from Powers, the founder of the firm. “We need to talk. Today.” Shit. Powers would not like him calling in after he’d just gone MIA for a day after showing up to court looking like some post-apocalyptic weirdo. He glanced in the mirror. No. Being seen like this was worse than being—

Annie, the ex, had no intention of allowing her hubby to hide in his apartment. She wanted the whole world to see what he was becoming. She gave him a nudge, and Baxter realized

he really had no reason to avoid his boss. He looked in the mirror once more. “I’m rocking this look,” he said, smiling. “I might even start a trend.”

Baxter kept getting strange looks from some people as he walked along, the little chains on his ears jangling. The day was looking gorgeous—bright, crisp and clear, with a pleasant breeze that blew the sometimes offensive odors of the city away. He would have to call Lew, see what she was up to. He felt like partying, maybe take a Zumba class.

The weird look effect ramped up as soon as he walked into his building. Here, people knew him, and right away Frank, the security guard, did a double take. He was an old school city guy and a wisecracker. “What happened?” He said as Baxter swiped his pass and pushed through the turnstile. “They run out of blue?”

“Hey, sometimes you have to take risks,” Baxter said, mussing his hair.

As he waited for the elevator, he saw Kennedy, another lawyer from his office. She tilted her head to the side and raised her palms to the sky. “I didn’t peg you for the nose ring type.”

“I’m full of surprises,” Baxter responded, and then his mind filled with panic. No. No. But, he couldn’t help himself. He raised his arms above his head and did a twirl. The people around gawked. A couple even applauded, though ironically. Horrified, Baxter now found himself executing a perfect ballet bow.

“I didn’t know you took ballet,” Kennedy said.

“I haven’t.”

She squinted. “You couldn’t have such perfect form without hours of practice.”

“Hey, Swan Lake,” Eric, another guy from the office who’d just walked up said. “Get in or get out of the way.”

The elevator had arrived. Baxter pushed in with the rest. When the elevator opened on their floor, Powers Law had its own floor in the building, he could feel eyes turning toward him, people whispering, some covering their mouths so he couldn’t see their expressions, but he knew they were laughing at him. He felt that same sense of disorientation as the day before, like the whole world had changed.

As a partner, he had his own office and a secretary to keep people out, so he dove in and told Melissa, his secretary, he didn’t want to see anyone. Melissa stared, trying to decide if she should say something, not sure how to read what she was seeing, especially her boss’s sculpted, feminine eyebrows. Finally, she said, “I like your lip ring.”

“Let’s just pretend none of this is happening,” Baxter said, gesturing toward his face and heading into his office, closing the door and feeling a rush of relief.

He sat down and got to work, waiting for the summons that came at precisely 10:31 am. “Mr. Powers would like to see you.”

Annie couldn’t help herself. She had a bunch of ideas, and they just came. First, she remembered how her stupid ex had always pestered her to wear thongs. Well...



Baxter had known a call from his boss was coming. Even though he’d mollified the client, word that one of their partners was walking around with pink hair would be a cause for concern. He grabbed his phone to check his teeth and face, run his fingers through his hair, and as he was sitting there, he felt his ass swell and spread under him. At the same time, his underwear slipped up between his ass cheeks. “Ow!” He said, wiggling and then standing. Even before he looked back, he could feel his ass was bigger, sticking out like a caboose, his pants stretched tight across his butt. Baxter had a closet built into the shelves along the wall, and he opened the door and looked in the mirror, standing sideways so he could see his profile. “Holy guacamole,” he said as he looked at what to him looked like a woman’s ass in the mirror. He wiggled, uncomfortable with the way his underwear rode up his ass crack, but shrieked again when he unzipped his pants and saw he was wearing a pair of lacey black panties. It took about half a second for him to connect the dots and realize he not only wore panties, but thong panties.

“What the fudge...?” He felt himself overcome with terror and shame. Panties were sexy and he loved them—on women. Realizing he wore a pair now made him feel completely emasculated. He could feel his balls shrinking, and he searched his memory. Had he put on panties this morning? He didn’t think so...

As Baxter freaked out, his whole body shaking as he unzipped his pants, thinking to wiggle out of these humiliating panties, Annie decided she wanted to see how his ass looked when he wore high heels. She started with a pair of cork wedge sandals, then decided to go higher and higher...

Baxter wobbled as he felt his heels suddenly lift, pushing him forward onto his toes. Then, his heels kept rising and rising higher and higher and higher until he was perched forward, arms outstretched trying to keep from falling forward. Lifting one foot and looking down, he saw he now wore strappy wedges with an alarmingly high heel. Even as he recoiled in shock to find himself wearing women's shoes, he felt like some strange force had wrapped itself around his waist and squeezed. Baxter felt his waist pull inward, and all the extra flesh seemed to flow down to his widening hips. At the same time, his muscle melted away as he became slender, his shoulders narrowed, his arms melted down to feminine twigs.

Now distracted from his shoes, he looked back at the mirror and gasped, putting one hand to his smooth cheek. He looked like a woman, or rather his body looked more like a woman's body with a slender waist and round hips. He'd lost muscle, looked skinny, and his shirt, like his pants, had shrunk and hugged his new figure. His pants were clearly a woman's trousers, with no pockets, and he now wore a fancy woman's blouse with a high lace collar and a flouncy bow. "I have a woman's body," Baxter whispered. "I look like a woman." He did not like looking like a woman.

"Yes, you do," Annie said, smirking at the shocked expression on Baxter's face.

The sight of his slender waist, the curve of his hips filled him with fear and rage. "No... no... NO!" Baxter shouted, grabbing a paper weight from his desk and hurling it across the room, where it shattered against the wall. "This is NOT ACCEPTABLE!"

She'd never seen him so rattled. He loved to pride himself on his cool, but she supposed most guys would probably lose it if they suddenly had curves.



Baxter's heels, which left his feet bare other than a strap across his toes, forced him to stand with his ass sticking back, his tits thrust forward. Try as he might, he couldn't seem to stand in any way that would resemble a man. He teetered over to his chair, arms out to his sides, feeling his new hips sway, and sat, thinking to get these humiliating shoes off his feet at least then shimmy out of the panties, which that dental floss up his ass was driving him insane, serving as a constant reminder he was wearing a woman's delicates.

Baxter has never worn strappy shoes or strappy anything, but it looked pretty simple. There was a strap that hugged the back of his ankle, and he was pretty sure if he pulled it down,

he would be able to slide right out of the shoe. The only problem was he couldn't seem to pull it down. He tugged, Yanked. Cursed. He couldn't get the platform heels off his feet.

The intercom buzzed. "Mr. Powers would like to remind you he doesn't like to be kept waiting."

Baxter groaned. At some risk, he was about to tell the founder of the firm he couldn't meet right now, and he was cycling through excuses but then, suddenly, it was as if a dark cloud lifted from his mind. So what if he was wearing high heels and women's clothes? So what if



he had pink hair and piercings and a banging ass? “Everything that happens,” Lew always said. “Is just something that happens.”

Once again, Annie had given her ex a nudge.

He got to his feet and tottered to the door, struggling to keep his balance perched up there on his toes. Making matters worse, his hair fell across his left eye, making it hard to see, and no matter how many times he brushed it away, it seemed to bounce right back. So, partially blinded and unable to really walk, he moved slowly and awkwardly—or, as some of the women thought watching him as he made his way across the office, he looked like a tween girl learning to walk in heels. It was, to some of them, kind of adorable. They were also impressed and a little jealous of his ass. “I wish I had an ass like that,” he heard Missy, the hot, 20 year old intern say.

Another of Lew’s sayings came to mind. “Life is better when it’s weird.” Well, his life had just gotten very weird. He minced across the main office floor, wishing to God there was some way to get his underwear out of his ass.

While the partners all had their private offices, the junior lawyers and the rest of the staff worked in an open-office style bullpen. Word of Baxter’s new look had created all kinds of buzz, so as he passed texts flew and heads poked up like meercats as everyone wanted to catch a glimpse. None of them was ready for what they saw. Baxter didn’t look at all like Baxter. Yeah, the hair and the piercings were shocking, but even more shocking was his slender, feminine body, perched up on a pair of insanely high wedges. None of the women at the office wore heels that high, and it was clear Baxter wasn’t used to them as he looked almost like he was drunk, wobbling and teetering, his arms stretched out to the sides as he struggled to make his way to Powers’ office.

He heard murmurs. “He’s so skinny. What’s his secret? I wish I had such good skin... tell me about it. Is he gay?” Baxter cringed at the comments, which seemed so wrong. He’d been a man among men, and now women wished they had his figure. It was death, but what choice did he have but to face it?

Eric, the obnoxious guy from the elevator, stood in the door to the break room, coffee mug in hand, one eyebrow raised as he looked over his former rival and, he figured, now very much defeated enemy mincing along. Powers would never go for this kind of thing in his office, Eric thought. Baxter was finished, partner or not.

“Nice shoes,” Eric said. “My wife has the same ones.”

“Shut up,” Baxter said, but he didn’t feel confident at all. How could he? Jerk, Baxter thought as he walked by and felt Eric’s eyes drop to his ass. Eric’s stare felt like a threat,

and feeling the man's eyes burning a hole in his slacks Baxter couldn't help but cringe a little. It was.. creepy, so Baxter hurried along, thinking "thank googly all he can do is stare."



Then, he felt Eric pinch his ass. He jumped, squealed and rushed into his boss's office, slamming the door. He then instantly froze as he saw Mr. Powers glaring at him. Mr. Powers had an aura about him, an aura of easy masculinity and unshakeable confidence. He had a full head of silver hair and a cleft chin that looked like it could be used to split wood as well as cold, gray eyes like a husky.

"Take a seat," Mr. Powers said, his voice flat, face expressionless.

Damn it, Eric thought as he walked over to the seat in front of Powers' desk. "I'm walking like a woman." He could feel his hips sway side to side, and he was holding his arms out, trying to stay balanced on his wedge heels. When he sat, he crossed his legs like a woman as well and put his hands in his lap. He felt like a fool sitting there in a blouse and slacks, with his pink hair and piercings.

"Explain this," Powers said, waving his hand at Baxter. Powers had thick fingers, and he wore a heavy golden ring with a black onyx stone on his non-wedding hand. "Explain why a partner in my firm is suddenly walking around with pink hair and a nose ring like some kind of rebellious 14-year-old girl." He never raised his voice. It stayed steady and flat, calm.

Baxter swallowed. "That," he said. "The judge in this case is a little—"

"Don't give me that shit," Powers said. "I'm glad your client fell for it, and the judge may go for it, too, in this case, but don't insult my intelligence. I'll ask again: why? Understand, this is your last chance to be honest with me."

"Honest..." Baxter said, nervously fingering his lip ring. "Yes, about my hair and the piercings..." He didn't fully understand his pink hair, his piercings. He'd gotten really high, gone nuts with Lew, he wasn't—

His ex-wife, Annie, decided to have some fun, taking over Baxter's mind, turning him into the equivalent of a ventriloquist dummy. "I don't know if a square like you can understand, Daddy-o," Annie said, putting on an accent like a bratty teen from a 1950s B-movie. "I'm a bacchanalian babe, a spontaneous sprite. I do what I want, when I want, with who I want. I'm a Manic Pixie, old man, and the uptight rules of your conformist world mean nothing to me." He flicked at his bangs with a slender hand and giggled, but inside Baxter wilted, cringe, felt utterly powerless and humiliated at what he was doing and saying.

"I live for the chaos, for the madness, for the zazz. I wanted pink hair, so I got pink hair, and I don't care what anyone thinks about it. Ya got that, Mr. Normal Pants?"

What the fuck am I saying? Baxter wondered. What the hell is wrong with me? It was too late, though. The words had come out. All he could do now was wait for Powers to answer.

At first, Powers didn't react at all. He just stared at Baxter. Then, he said, "You've gone insane."

Annie giggled and Baxter giggled. "Freedom looks like insanity to a mind in chains," Baxter screamed, getting up. Then, he saluted. "Are you really happy?" He said, saluting. "Are you really alive?"

"I'll get help for you, Baxter. I will."



“I am a jelly donut!” Annie screamed and Baxter screamed, then he turned on his heels and marched out, putting an extra sway in his hips, throwing his nose in the air. He looked back over his shoulder just before he left the room, thrust his ass back and winked. “If you ever want to escape from your prison of fear, come find me.”

Powers watched, shook his head. It was a shame to see someone suffer a total break down, especially someone who’d been such a good lawyer. For some reason, though, the questions lingered in his mind. Was he really happy? Was he really alive?

He thought of Bax again, shaking his head. What a fine ass he had. Wow.

Part III

There was a quiet, almost frightened knock. Lew opened the door, and her eyes went wide as she took in Baxter's messy new hairstyle, then let her eyes drop to his slender, feminine frame and curvy hips. "Wow," she said, as her eyes continued down to his round, coltish legs and then to the wedge heels. "We're the same height now."



Baxter raised his arms to the sides and did a ballet bow. "I have no idea what's happening to me," he said, stepping into the apartment, slipping his purse off his shoulder and setting it on the couch. Lew got her first look at his bouncy new heart shaped ass.

"I think I know exactly—okay, I just have to say, awesome ass, dude—anyway, wow, okay. You're manifesting life crazy, dude. I mean, I've never seen anything like it."

Baxter sat down, and programmed by his wife with new, feminine mannerisms, he crossed his legs at the knee like a woman. He brushed his bangs back. "Manifesting?"

"It's when your thoughts become reality. Like when someone thinks of an old friend and wonders how they're doing, and then that old friend suddenly calls them. That kind of thing, only in this case, well..." she waved at his body. "You want to smoke some weed?"

"Hell, yes," Baxter said.

Lew went to her stash and got some weed, then sat down next to Bax and started to pack the bowl on her hooka. "I still don't follow," Baxter said, looking around the room, appreciating the boho vibe on a level he'd never done before. Her batik wall hangings in particular now really spoke to him. He needed one. Or two.

"You found me, this off the wall, sorta crazy girl who couldn't be more removed from your corporate robot deal. You wanted escape, right? Something new and exciting?" Lighting the weed in the bowl, she took a toke, held, then released, the air filling with the sweet smell of her always premium herb.

"Yeah," Baxter agreed, taking a hit from the bong. Holding it.

"Well, you got a taste, and you liked it. Now, you're manifesting your truest desires. You don't just want me. You want to be me. You're turning into me." She took the hose and took a toke. "And doing a very good job of it."

"You?" The thought unnerved Baxter because though he didn't think it was true, he kind of thought it might be true. He thought about his hair, piercings, his changing body. Even just sitting, he couldn't ignore the feeling of his big, soft behind. "I don't want to be a girl."

"You're body says otherwise."

Baxter's ex-wife, Annie, loved that Lew had decided Bax wanted to turn into a pixie dream girl. She loved that Lew had suggested it to him, especially given the stunned look on his face. She decided this was the perfect time to send her husband on another life changing trippy gender walkabout. As Lew and Bax traded the hose back and forth, getting higher and higher, Annie let the magic flow as both Bax and Lew found themselves getting horny,

staring into each other's eyes. Lew took the first move, brushing Baxter's hair back, kissing him, then pushing him onto his back, ripping his shirt open.

Bax had never felt this horny, and he was a horny man. They kissed, caressed, peeled each other out of their clothes and then... and then...

"Damn it," Bax said, his voice cracking, but settling back to its normal range. For now. "This never happens to me." Once more his voice cracked.

"Oh, it happens to all guys," Lew said. "Anyway, I have an idea of how we can spice things up a bit."

"Yeah?"

"Wait here."

Lew went off to the bathroom. Bax waited, humiliated, but aching with desire. His junk seemed smaller, and it wasn't reacting at all to the fact he had a beautiful woman he was crazy about naked and right there. It made him nervous, especially given Lew's suggestion. What was about to happen would make him even more nervous.

Deciding he needed a little more high, Bax lit up the hooka and took a toke, then gagged and started to choke and cough as Lew threw the bathroom door open and stood there, legs spread, arms crossed over her chest in a power pose, wearing a strap on dildo.

Baxter felt his entire body clench at the sight of her strapped up, and the look on her face was—feral. He pushed himself away from her, coughing, pounding his chest, trying to clear his throat.

"It's all about experimentation," Lew said, striding across the room, her walk now ropey and manly. "It's all about breaking boundaries."

Annie, loving this turn of events and getting all kinds of ideas how she wanted the scene to play out, made a change.

"I don't think... I don't..." Bax started to say, I don't think so, but he found himself gazing at that dildo, feeling a heat and a hunger growing in him. The dildo was the prettiest thing he'd ever seen, and he craved it, wanted it more than he'd ever wanted anything. "I don't ... I don't think I can say no."

Lew chuckled, a gruff, masculine chuckle. "You love it, don't you, you dirty girl."

"Dirty Girl." Hearing himself called a dirty girl made Baxter's body get hot, flush. "I hate it," he whispered, "but I need it."

“I thought so.”

Baxter reached out and grabbed the dildo, squeezed, and the feeling of it in his hand made him gasp. Without even thinking, he dropped to his knees. He smiled up at Lew, a naughty look on his face. Lew nodded, and Bax went down. He felt Lew put her hand on his head, just like he was a woman. He couldn't understand why he was doing it, but he needed to, and it felt so good, and he knew this was what Lew wanted, how he could prove to her he was no uptight corporate robot. No. He was a manic pixie through and through.

There was no release. Only growing tension, and somehow, somehow, shocked, appalled and yet aroused like never before, he found himself on his hands and knees while Lew grunted. He made little squeaking noises, and as Lew made love to him his voice grew higher and higher... and at the same time, he felt his chest swelling, rising, bouncing—Lew kept going, her motions growing faster and more intense, and as they did his voice rose, his breasts swelled—thrust-- his voice got higher, his swaying breasts heavier. Maybe it should



have freaked him out, but it felt so good, so right. “Unh... unh... unh... omigod... omigod...” he heard himself crying out in a high-pitched, woman's voice... “Omigod... OOOOOOO--- eeeeeeee!”

Annie felt over laughing as she gave her ex his husband his first female orgasm. Bax looked blissfully confused, not really understanding what had just happened, but knowing that he liked it and wanted more. No man

can ever be the same, Annie thought, once he's orgasmed like a woman. Bax was broken. Totally broken. He would need a new name. She started thinking about it.

After, Bax lay on his side. Lew was spooning him, one hand playing with one of his newly grown tits. He was lost in post-coital confusing, a mixture of pleasure and shame. His mind flickered from one shocking new experience to another, but with Lew gently massaging the soft, firm weight of his new puppies, his mind went to his breasts. "I grew a pair of tits," he said, wincing slightly at the sound of his feminine voice, which in turn brought the memory of how it had kept rising and rising as Lew had—pounded him.

"And good ones," Lew said. "So firm." She squeezed, and he moaned. "Your voice sounds pretty. You sound like a girl. It's like I banged the man right out of you."

"Hey."

"I don't mean that in a bad way," Lew said, kissing him on the neck. "This is all a part of your journey, and I'm just glad I can help you find your truest self, babe."

"A guy can't just grow a pair of tits." Baxter knew he had, indeed, done just that, but he also knew it wasn't possible. Impossible or not, he could only feel less of a man now that he had big, soft breasts. Like a girl.

"Manifesting," Lew said, blowing hot breath into his ear, squeezing then pinching his nipple.

"Unh. Should it be called Womanfesting in my case?" Bax said, his voice hoarse. "It's not right for a guy to have tits."

"How do they feel?"

"Good," Baxter admitted as he squeezed his legs together, reveling in fascinating new, female sensations his breasts offered. "Incredible."

"And how does the saying go, little pixie?"

"If it feels good; it is good," Bax said, turning to give Lew a kiss, to thank her for all the pleasure she'd given him, the life-changing lessons.

"Okay. Time for more fun," Lew said, pinching him on the hip. "Let's go... go... go..."

"Where? What?" Bax said.

"Adventure," Lew said taking his small hand, pulling him to his feet. "But first, you need to make yourself pretty. Time for makeup."

"Makeup?" Annie let Bax have his normal reaction. No way, he thought. He'd already gone too far... he... he... yes. He needed to know what it felt like to put on makeup, to see how he'd look with makeup. There was only one problem. "I don't know how to put on makeup."

"I'm going to show you," Lew said with a smile. "This is going to be so much fun."

Bax heard himself giggle, and said, “I can’t wait.” He sat primly, legs crossed at the knees. Lew pinned his hair back, pulling his bangs out of his eyes, then covered his face in moisturizer, then foundation. It felt cool and smelled pretty. She brushed eyeshadow over his eyelids, applied eyeliner and mascara. All of the colors struck him as so pretty, and the floral smell of the products made his head swim. He tapped his foot, tapped and tapped as she had him pucker and then used a wand to paint his lips. As soon as she was done, he started bouncing in place, giggling, “let me see. Let me see.”



Lew handed him her phone, and he squealed when he saw his face now painted with sparkly eyeshadow and blush, sparkly lipstick. The whole while Lew did his makeup, Annie had been sculpting his face, softening his features. His eyes didn’t just look bigger: they were bigger. Hips lips were more plump and inviting even without the lipstick. “I look like a girl,” he whispered. “I look **just**

like a girl.”

“Not a girl,” Lew said, shaking her head from side to side.

“No?” To his surprise, it hurt hearing her say he didn’t look like a girl. He wanted and needed to look like a girl.

“Not a girl,” Lew repeated cupping his chin and tilting his head back. “A pixie dream girl.”

“Hahahaha!” Baxter laughed his new, bubbly laugh. He jumped to his feet and hugged Baxter, then started prancing in place. “Let’s go out. Let’s find a party. Let’s dance the chaos.”

“Oh, we are going out,” Lew said. “I want to show you off. Now, come on over to my magic closet of wonders.” She opened the door to her closet, packed as it was with clothes. “Pick whatever you want to wear.”

Perfect Annie, thought. Too perfect.

“Girl clothes?” Baxter hesitated. He wasn’t into cross dressing. But, then, Annie made a change, and he suddenly felt himself tingle with pleasure at the thought of wearing a cute skirt or a sexy dress, maybe a bustier or a corset? It was forbidden, wrong, transgressive. It was so him. A wicked smile lit up his face and he turned to Annie. “The boys aren’t going to stand a chance.” He stopped. “Wait, I don’t like boys or anything, I just—”

Lew put her hands on his shoulders and turned him back to face the closet. “Pick an outfit. We can work on your denial later, toots.”

Baxter’s eyes were drawn immediately to a pair of hot pink ankle boots with spikey straps perched on the shelf above the dress. He took them down, caressing them as he held them to his chest. “Love,” he said.

“You’ve got great taste.”

Bax tore into the closet like a woman possessed. “Omigod,” he said, grabbing a hot pink corset with white ruffles and holding up in front of his body. “I need to wear this.”

“Of course you do.”

He paired the corset with a tiny mini-skirt as well as fishnet stockings. As he slipped into each new garment, he felt like his whole body was being kissed by a thousand pairs of soft, silky lips, his skin tingling, and that delightful tension building inside him until, as he finished zipping up his boots and stood, he gasped, crying out, his knees going weak as he orgasmed again, a feeling like a ball of heat exploding inside him. He collapsed back onto the chair, knees together, face flush as he fanned himself, his pupils fat with pleasure.

“Omigod,” he said. “It’s just... everything is going on inside me like—wow and wow some more.”

“You are one lucky girl,” Lew said, recognizing what had just happened, finding it cute and



kind of amazing so see Baxter, uptight, super macho control freak Baxter, getting off by dressing up in her clothes. She was happy for him. It confirmed one of her core beliefs: that most guys who tried so hard to seem so macho, were actually desperately trying to hide their feminine tendencies.

Girl. Baxter wasn’t sure how he felt about being called a girl, though with his newly grown breasts shoved up and threatening to pop out of the top of his corset, he wasn’t really in much position to argue about it. Girl. He turned the word over in his mind. Hecksy, he thought. Maybe I am a girl.

“I want a picture,” Lew said, taking out her phone. Bax struck a sexy pose, smiling and giggling, and then rushed over to see, squealing, clapping. “I’m fucking hot!” He said in that sexy little voice. “Golly wolly, it’s so empowering to put on a skirt.”

“I wish more men felt that way,” Lew said. “I’ve always felt the world would be a much safer place if men wore dresses and heels.”

Annie chuckled. Her dear old ex was now and forever more would be obsessed with shoes, especially heels, opting to wear them whenever possible. So, he now had a fetish for women’s clothes and shoes as well as makeup, piercings and public dancing. He was coming along nicely.

Bonus



Manic Pixie 4

Baxter followed Lew down the stairs to a club in a low-ceilinged basement, all neon lights and murky shadows, people crowding around tables with small, flickering lamps. The otherworldly sound of an armonica, like the tinkling hum of someone playing glasses, bounced around the room in muted echoes. Smoke swirled around the entranced dancers, and before he and Lew even hit the dance floor, someone handed Baxter a joint. He took a toke, laughing, then he and Lew began to dance, the world seeming like it moved in slow motion, even the sound seemed to move in slow motion, like it was made of syrup. The air was so thick with smoke—marijuana, tobacco, vape—Bax felt his head go light in mere



minutes, and the room seemed to swell and recede around him. He became acutely aware

of his new body, the way his chest jiggled, the way his corset crushed his ribs, the way his diaphanous skirt swirled around his legs, themselves tightly bound in fishnet stockings.

Bax had no idea how long he'd been dancing when he turned and found himself staring into the face of his boss. "Mr. Powers," Bax said, surprised. Mr. Powers' eyes went right to Bax's breasts.



"Call me Pierce," the other man said, now boldly putting a hand on Bax's back, pulling him closer so their hips slammed together and Bax found his breast pressing against Pierce's body. Pierce wore the same suit he'd worn at the office, the same tie, the same everything. His hair was slicked back. He looked so out of place. "You're a woman now," Pierce said, stroking Baxter's cheek with the back of his hand. "An actual woman."

"Guilty as charged," Baxter said, breaking out into his new, high-pitched laugh. "I don't exactly know how I turned into a woman, but Lew says I manifested this body." Baxter shook his shoulders, rubbing his breasts across Pierce's

body. "Can you even believe such a thing?" He felt flirty, oddly drawn to his old boss. Something in Baxter sensed pain in the man, frustration, repression. "Also, I'm quirky."

"I'm glad you did whatever you did," Pierce said, letting his eyes once more drop to Baxter's chest. "I'm glad you manifested this face. You look like you're 19."

Pierce, his hands still on Bax's hips, began a kind of shuffling slow dance. Bax, not knowing what else to do with his arms, threw them around Pierce's neck. Lew was sitting at one of the tables now with a guy who had long dreadlocks. She met Bax's eyes and nodded, mouthing "yes."

The armonica playing sped up, grew more intense, frantic. The singer began to chant, "yes.... Yes... yes... always yes... yes..."

"What are you doing here?" Bax asked, conscious of how cute and pretty his voice sounded, how much shorter he was than this man, even in his high heels.

"I came to find you. I had to find you."

"Why?" Bax asked.

Pierce got a distant look in his eyes as he stared off into space. "I don't know."

Bax thought back to his meeting with Pierce earlier that day. It made sense to him now, made sense why Pierce had come looking for him.

"I got through to you," Baxter said, reaching up, touching Pierce's face. "You heard my words. Even though my voice was false, you felt my truth."

Pierce took Baxter's hand and said, "come with me."

Baxter glanced at Lew. She mouthed "yes."

The performer was pounding on the armonica now, pounding and pounding, shouting "yes... yes... yes..."

Baxter smiled and said, "yes."

Annie, watching, said, "yes!"

Pierce smiled and said, "yes."

Though Pierce led them out of that club, Baxter took over from there, leading Pierce now on a tour of the underground: clubs, bars, al fresco performances of forgotten theater pieces from the 19th century... there were drugs and drinks and more drugs, there was laughter and dancing. As the sun rose, they stumbled into Pierce's apartment, the one where he took his

mistresses, his flings. He and Baxter got themselves undressed, and then Baxter found himself on his back, legs in the air while Pierce thrust into him, taking his virginity as a woman. It was pedestrian, Bax thought, but Pierce was new to all this, and he would need time to really loosen up.

They woke in the afternoon and lay in bed eating burritos wrapped in tinfoil. “Oh, hell,” Pierce said when he took a bite and a small avalanche of black beans tumbled down onto the sheets. He started to get up, but Baxter grabbed his arm, pulled him back down and kissed him.

“Life is messy,” Baxter said. “Leave it that way.”

Pierce shrugged. “I just slept with a former partner who was a guy until a day ago, so why not?” He took another bite of his burrito. “So good,” he said, his mouth full of food. “I haven’t eaten in bed since... college.”

“How does it feel to just let go?” Baxter asked. “To just do whatever feels right?”

“Good,” Pierce said. “Incredible.” He looked over at Bax and touched him on the shoulder. “I never noticed this tattoo before.” Baxter looked over to see the tattoo of a Pixie on his little shoulder. He’d never seen it before, either, but he smiled when he saw it.

“That’s so perfect,” he said. “That’s so me.” A sudden sadness filled his eyes, and he looked away. “It all goes back to my childhood trauma.” He fought back tears as he remembered the story Annie had planted in his mind.

“Trauma?” Pierce asked. “What happened?”

“When I was a little boy, and that seems so, so long ago now. When I was a boy, I got a dog for my 8th birthday. It was a labradoodle. All Black. I named him All Black.” Bax nuzzled his head against Pierce’s chest. “I loved that dog more than anything, and we did everything together. We went for walks in the woods, we played in the pool, and most of all, we spent hours and hours playing Twister.”

Pierce raised an eyebrow. A dog playing Twister? Total bullshit, but he just listened. He’d already concluded Bax was insane. “Well, around the time I was nine, I stole a neighbor’s pickle barrel. It was only half full of pickles—”

“Hold on,” Pierce said, trying not to laugh. “Were they dill pickles?”

“Bread and butter,” Bax answered without hesitation. “Tasty. Anyway, thinking of the old George Washington story, I walked right up to my father and said, “I cannot tell a lie. I stole the pickle barrel from Mr. and Mrs. Klunkerfunker.”



“Go on,” Pierce said, still trying not to laugh.

“Well, it did not go like the Washington story. My father took All Black away. I cried. I screamed. “Oh, you’ll be seeing your stupid pet again,” he said, “only also he will not be the same when the Doctor Victor VonSurgeon is done with him.”

“What have you done, you evil old man?” I shouted through my tears. “What have you done?”

“You will see, pickle fingers,” he answered.

“You will see.”

Annie, herself, was rolling now as her dumb ex shared the absurd story, but one that he believed, thanks to her, was totally true.

“It turned out my father had sent All Black to a diabolical surgeon who lived in Transylvania. Some months later, a box with holes in it arrived at our doorstep. I heard a meow. My father was there, watching. ‘Open the box,’ he said while smoking his pipe, which he always filled with kiwi-flavored tobacco. I did. Inside was what looked like a kitten—all white. ‘What is this?’ I asked. ‘What does it mean?’”

“My father began to laugh. Don’t you recognize your stupid dog, now transformed into a kitten? Hahahahaha!” Baxter paused. “Not only was he a kitten, but he was too small to play Twister. The one thing that had brought us more joy than anything was gone. His tiny little kitten legs were too short. To this day, I cannot look at a white kitten without being brought to tears.” He began to cry then, overcome with emotion over his false memories. “Twister,” he cried out. “Twister.”

Pierce held Baxter as the other sobbed. The crazy story had seemed funny, but the tears changed all that. He felt bad now for his one-time partner.

“My poor dog. He would always try to play with the other dogs, but they would say, go away. You are a cat, and we hate you. Then, when he tried to play with the cats, they would say, you stink at cat games. Get out of here.”

“It was from this that I learned to live life to the fullest, to treat each day as the only day,” Baxter said. “Because, as the old Slovakian saying goes, you never know when you may wake up to find yourself a kitten and too small to play Twister.”

Pierce felt a protectiveness come over him. Yes, Baxter was mad, but he wanted to help her, to rescue her. There was a question he needed to ask. “What did you name him after he got turned into a kitten? All White?”

“That would have been too cruel,” Baxter said. “No. I named him Used to Be All Black. USTEBAB for short.”

For the next several weeks, Pierce and Baxter hung out, did drugs, had sex, lingered in jazz clubs. Baxter pushed Pierce to try new things, to let loose, to experiment with different sex positions. Then, one day, it just seemed like Pierce was over it, and he said so. They’d just gotten done making love, and Pierce has sat up. “It’s been fun, kiddo,” he said. “But, time for me to get back to my real life.”

Baxter felt sad, abandoned, betrayed. He made his way over to Lew’s, and she talked him down. “This is what we do for these uptight guys,” she explained as they traded a joint back and forth. “We’re manic pixie dream girls. We’re fun and obligation free. They spend time with us until they get all that out of their systems, and then they go back to their two and a half kids and nice, boring housewives. Don’t feel bad that he left you. It means you did your job.”

“And what do I do now?” Baxter said.

“Just live your life and, before you know it, some other uptight citizen come looking for a crazy girl to spice up his life.”

Baxter grinned. “Sounds like a plan.”

Pierce had bought Bax out, and he’d made a generous offer, so Baxter found himself with a lot of money. He didn’t need to work, but he was an artist now, a dancer, and he needed to share his gifts with the world, so he found himself wearing a tutu and a corset along with stiletto heels, twirling and dancing on a subway platform while his boombox played a Tchaikovsky- Menudo mash-up an artist friend had made. He had a bucket which people threw money into as they passed, though most just walked by, eyes blank, just trying to get to the next stop.

Bax felt sorry for them. Were they even really alive? How many would be happier if they could just perform free-style modern dance in the subway?

As the music finished and he ended his dance with a bow, he heard clapping coming from behind him. Turning, he saw his ex-wife, Annie, grinning. “Annie Bananie!” He squealed, running up to throw his arms around her for a big hug.

“Baxter,” Annie said, pretending to be surprised. “You’ve become a woman.”

“Oh! Yeah,” Baxter said, looking down at himself. “I forgot. How crazy, right?”

“I love your tutu,” Annie said.

“Thanks,” Baxter said, doing a twirl. “I feel so me in a tutu.”

“Wanna know a secret?”

A subway train came blasting through the station without stopped, just filling the whole tunnel with thundering noise and a blast of air.

“Sure,” Baxter said once the noise had died down. “I love secrets.”



“Zazz,” Annie said, using the trigger word she’d selected.

Baxter’s mouth dropped open as a lot of the mental conditioning she’d applied to him melted away. Suddenly, he tottered on his high heels. He was himself again. He was the arrogant male lawyer, the man’s man, and----- and he was wearing a tutu, and he had breasts and he, he was standing on tippy toes, his feet squeezed into stiletto heels, and he was a woman now, a girl. “What the hell have you done to me?” He squeaked, his hand going to his throat as he heard himself speak in the tiny little girl voice she’d given him.

“Dance, dream girl, dance,” Annie said, laughing. “This is what you get for dumping me.”



The music started to play, this time a Bach fugue mashed up with bluegrass banjo. Baxter found himself dancing in spite of himself. A small crowd gathered, a lot of them guys who were looking him over, obviously horny. Baxter smiled and danced, but inside he was screaming.

“Zazz!”

Cooper Kadee

The End

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