

The Stuckposing Vignettes

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A Slightly Annoying Girl

She was a slightly annoying girl with slightly curled brown hair and glasses slightly perched atop her nose. That was all the apprenticed wizard knew about her, and when it came time for him to practice transformation spells, something else about her called to him.

His first intention was to cast a simple spell that would give her brown yarn hair that would wear off in an hour's time. But then he remembered she was slightly annoying, and had the very mischievous idea to make her into a complete rag doll. He gave her the barest taps on the head, and the slightly annoying girl with slightly curled brown hair and glasses slightly perched atop her nose collapsed, her cotton plush body limply tilting to one side.

He was about to leave, but did a generous thing and checked the thoughts of the now-plush girl who could no longer move, to assure her that the spell would only last an hour and that she should not be terribly worried. But he heard a strange thought inside the toy's head:

"This is so cool!"

The wizard was stunned, but he realized that, perhaps, the slightly annoying girl would like a bit more

time to experience being a plush doll. With a wave of his wand he extended the spell, and with another, he sent her away to a place where this huggable plaything was sure to be appreciated: the local toy store.

Bad Robot

He first saw her walking the convention halls of A-Kon, and his infatuation was immediate. Here she was, the girl of his dreams, dressed in one of the best robot cosplays he had ever seen. Robots, he knew, were terribly easy to control.

He was quick to ask for a picture, without robot head, and she happily obliged. Once taken, he thanked her and, unbeknownst to her, slipped a tiny microchip into her helmet. Knowing the chip would do its job and draw her to him, he slipped into the crowd and later his hotel room, all the while rejoicing that soon he would have a new toy.

The robot making process went quickly, with the microchip releasing thousands of nanites that spread throughout her body, making flesh into metal. And it reprogrammed her mind to think like the toy she was dressed as. It made her think like StarScream, deadliest of the seekers.

This, of course, would prove to be his undoing when she arrived at his room, slightly confused and partially transformed. She asked if he was Megatron, Leader of the Decepticons. Not knowing the Transformers all that well, he made his greatest mistake and answered yes. She grinned a horrible grin and raised her arm and its mounted cannon.

"You mean you *were* Megatron," She said, laughing.



All in Fun

My comment was innocuous enough and I didn't mean any harm by it. Really, I didn't; I was just joking with the Admin. Sure, I called her a 'Little Toy,' but I figured it was all in fun. After all, she admitted to dreaming of being a toy on a regular basis. I thought the matter was dead, because she never said anything about it for a week.

But a little while later, she posted a happy, but cryptic, remark in that thread. It was then I noticed a new DM. Opening it up, I was a little surprised to see a picture and a few arcane words I can't now remember.

But I remembered reading those cryptic words, and a tornado of 1s and 0s leapt from the computer and surrounded me. They completely enveloped me and forced me to sleep. When I came awake, I stretched my arms wide, balanced perfectly on my toes, just like, I realized horrifically, the ballerina in the picture.

I felt and heard an odd clicking sound; something was winding in my back.

"Dance for me, little toy." The Admin told me, and I obeyed, dancing across a tiny stage built just for me. At first I was outraged; why do this to me when I was just joking? But then I realized, it was all in fun.

Barbie on Vacation

Barbara had to go. Had to run. And once she was gone, she was going to sue the resort for false advertisement. It promised to take her back to childhood. Instead, it seemed to be turning her into a Barbie Doll. But what can you expect from a free week vacation package?

She tried to move as fast as she could to pack her clothes, but her joints were stiff and didn't want to move. And then Barbie noticed the liability waiver she hadn't read when she signed in. Reading now every word terrified her, as the contract said explicitly that only paying customers could relive their childhood, and those who stayed for free would be helping *them*.



Barbie didn't understand what that meant, until the door to her room swung open to reveal a woman about her age. The new woman covered her mouth with her hands, and eyes began to sparkle with joyful tears. She hugged Barbie, and the doll somehow hugged back.

The woman started crying and she kissed Barbie's plastic cheek. "I'm so sorry I threw you away. I'll never do it again. We'll be best friends as long as we live."

And they were.

The Auction

My coven worked very hard on improving the image of witches in our little town, and to further those goals, we held a yearly charity auction for local schools, parks, and libraries. Now, this was no normal auction, as the winning buyer would have the right to cast one of any number of spells upon his (or her) witch, so long as it was temporary. The length of the spell simply depended on the amount of money bid. While we had certain rules about harming ourselves, and others, as well as certain mature acts, we were shocked by the cunning creativity the townsfolk had.

At the time I went on stage, no one had yet been bought for more than \$3,500, which equated to 35 hours under a spell. I was young, single, and a former ballerina; the last I especially played up by attending the auction in my best tutu. The bidding began at \$100, and ended five seconds later when a man in the nicest suit I had ever seen called out: "5 Million Dollars."

The crowd went hush, while my coven sisters whispered over what to do. Perhaps it was a prank, perhaps he did not have the money. But he ended that debate by dropping his briefcase on the auction table, revealing the full amount inside. We still needed to make sure he was not violating one of our rules, and I wish he had been. I wished he had said he wanted me to dance, to



teach, or anything else. But he wanted me to be a ballerina figurine, like a crown jewel, to be placed in his wife's closet as an ornament to her beauty and his love for her. He wished to reduce me to decoration.

My sisters instituted a few more rules for their auctions regarding the maximum duration of spells. But that would not matter to me for another 5 years, 258 days, and 8 hours.

Too Perfect

I was packing up; getting ready to leave my studio, and the city, for a good long time. The local mage's council was getting too interested in my photography hut and bringing a bit too much heat on me. So, all my toys were in their boxes, all in pristine condition as the day I made them.

Then she walked in. She walked in with a bright smile and was wearing *that*. She was too perfect and too adorable and immediately my mind began to think where she would look the prettiest. Maybe atop a music box, or inside a snowglobe. She looked at me with imploring eyes, hardly saying a word.

My worst instincts got to me and I began to work my magic upon her; her ravishing flesh made supple plastic; her bright eyes turned to glass. She still said nary a word; not even thrilling cries or wonderful shouting. Not even a simple wondering what was happening to her. She ever smiled that perfect smile.

That's when the door burst open and five robed wizards bounded inside. They hit me with stunning spells and I crumpled to the ground, just the same as so many of my rag dolls. I watched the wizards return my newest toy's humanity and take away her everlasting beauty. She winked at me and walked from my studio, still smiling her too perfect smile.



Joining the Parade

Donna watched the parade floats go by, not terribly impressed by any of them, much preferring to be on a ride of some kind. The float of pinocchio puppets came around the corner and she let out a sigh. She knew better than to bother her enraptured friend, who blithely cheered at every costumed performer who went by.

One of the puppets on the float, a doll with a giant head and overstuffed mittens looked at Donna. She stared at her with giant plastic blue eyes. Even as the float moved, she never wavered her intense gaze. Donna wanted to look away, but never told her neck to actually move. Her body felt heavier; her eyelids fell closed. Weak in the knees, Donna fell to the ground. Her friend grabbed her elbow and yanked Donna back up. But when she grabbed her other elbow, Donna knew something was amiss. Her eyes burst open, and she saw the world from atop the float, strings pulling her body in every direction but where she wanted. And Donna watched herself and her friend leave through the crowd.



Donna yelled to the people watching, shouting that she was human, not a puppet. But no one could hear her over music and laughter. She wanted to escape her string masters, but never told her body to actually move. Then, the music seeped into her mind and she started singing with a pre-recorded voice. When the float came to a rest in the storage hanger, the marionette happily smiled and waited very patiently for her owners to come and put her away.



Spellthread

Jill jumped from behind the dressing room, to reveal herself to the shop attendant at the costume store. It seemed far too early in the year to look for costumes, but she couldn't help herself. The employee, a nice young man with red hair and green eyes, nodded and laughed.

"You look wonderful."

"Thank you, owner." Jill giggled and curtsied. "Wait, owner?" She asked.

"Oh, don't worry about that. That's one of our spellthread costumes that makes the wearer act a little more . . . in-character. It's harmless and wears off at Halloween. Do you like it?"

"I love it, owner! I just wanna be played with!"

The man laughed. "Well, do you want me to ring you up now, or wait till later?"

"I didn't really plan on buying anything," She said.

The man waved her off. "I meant, do you want me to buy *you* now."

"Ummmmm," The doll thought as thoughtfully as she could, but kept getting side tracked imagining herself lying in a big comfy bed surrounded by toys like her.

"I'll play with you," the man said to sweeten the deal.

"Oh, I'd like that." She took her owner's hand and skipped away with him . . .



Competitive Gift Giving

Natasha met up with Katherine almost a block from Zooley's house, and they started the long walk to get to the too-crowded party.

"Don't worry, I got a present from both of us," Kat said preemptively.

"Great, I didn't have any idea what to get her," Nat said. Zooley was the pickiest person in the world to get presents for. In fact, she thrived on that. Every gift was to be one of a kind and genuine, and over the years they became more and more bizarre and unique. But every year was a blast of bizarre and beautiful, so Nat and Kat always participated. "I do need you to sign something, though." Kat handed the box to Nat.

She slowed down a little and popped the lid off the pink box, and didn't have time to react before a cloud of pink dust rushed out and hit her. Nat fell backwards . . . and fell . . . and fell, the world growing enormously around her. Kat crouched down, and looked like a giant to Nat.

The little doll that Nat was now had a look of quiet shock on her plasticizing face, but that soon turned into a sly pixie grin to match the pink pixie doll.

"I think I'm totally going to win Best Present this year," Kat said, putting Nat in the box and closing the lid again.



The Rubik's Trap

"Oh, hey, what a neat costume! Is it comfy?" Princess Peach asked Miranda.

"No, not really. It's a magic prison and I'm trapped in it."

Peach studied Miranda's Rubik's Prison. "Oh, I've never been good at these. You know, ditzzy blonde and all."

"Please, just leave me alone." Miranda really wanted to make it back to the magic shop where she bought the 'costume' so she could buy the instruction manual. Damn shady business practices.

Peach clapped her hands excitedly. "Oh, if you just move this middle section, then everything lines up perfectly!" She began to twist Miranda's costume around.

"Wait no! I need to set this in a special pattern to get out!"

But Peach moved too fast, or Miranda moved too slow, and the cube began to glow as soon as she lined up all the colors.

"What have you done! I'm going to be traaaapppped!"

Miranda's Cube jumped into the air, bringing her with it, as the sides spun around, the pieces quickly shifting and sliding across her squared body. Miranda shrank inside the also shrinking box until she was sealed inside.

The cube fell to the ground seconds later, a normal sized Rubik's Cube. It's sides were made from tinted glass, and when Peach crouched to look, she saw Miranda perfectly healthy inside. Peach cooed; the Rubik's girl had her hair in pigtails and wore a multicolored checkered dress and shoes. She pressed against the glass, banging her tiny hand against the wall.

"Please get me out of here!"

Peach actually laughed at the Rubik's girl and picked up the cube, shaking her around. She twisted the sides, and was delighted to see the colors on Miranda's dress shift as well. "Don't worry, I'm sure I can solve you." She twisted the cube some more. "Eventually," she added with a frown.

The Rubik's girl sighed and slumped against a wall of her new home, with no hope that her new owner could get her out. Especially after Peach waved to a friend, "Look at my new toy!"

"Just my luck."

The House Always Wins

Jill didn't understand what was going on; didn't understand why she was so tense. Despite what Ocean's Eleven led you to believe, casinos were easy to rob. For her, at least. She had taken tens of thousands from five on the strip already, and was in the process of taking a sixth.

Months of learning the layout and suffering through an insufferable costume had paid off, she had hundreds of the diamond chips The Royal used for currency in her purse. She kept out of camera sightlines and went for the security exit along a glassy wall.

Jill slipped inside and almost started giggling. She was home free! She knew the maze well, taking two lefts and a right and then . . . a mirrored wall. Jill spun around; the wall wasn't supposed to be there. She turned just in time to see another glass wall lock into place.

She turned again. Another view of her ridiculous red and black jester costume. And something else. She spun again, but not of her own will. The walls were closer. Another dizzying twist. And another. Jill felt like she was in a box. She tried to move, but her body just kept twisting and coiling, and she didn't know why.

Everything stopped. Jill had just a moment to collect herself. And then, in a shower of lights and chips, she came bursting from the top of her box. Jill sprang up and down, up and down, sending a shower of diamond chips into a gathered crowd. They cheered at their new found riches, and at the Jill-in-the-Box that gave it to them.



Plight of a Music Box Ballerina

It was not a stretch to say that Ballerina glared at Owner. "You won't get away with this, I hope you know," Ballerina said, her hands on her hips in a huffy way. Owner smiled, but did not look from the mirror as she tried on different pairs of earrings.

"Oh, I have gotten away with this. Do you even remember your name?"

"I'm Ballerina," Ballerina said crossly, "and I always went to school in costume and danced wherever I went. We have been over this before."

Owner laughed, though Ballerina did not know why. "So you don't remember that magic necklace I slipped to you? You don't remember your transformation into your present form?"

"That's silly," the toy said, "people can't be turned into dolls. And that's not what I'm talking about."

Owner looked down at her tiny dancer, brow furrowed in confusion. "Then what is it I won't get away with?"

"You haven't let me dance in three days!"

Never Stop Smiling

"Just keep smiling, Martha. Play this part right and that weird old wizard won't even notice you." She watched him through the glass, practically sprinting through the concourse in front of the toy store, looking for her. The idea to hide in plain sight, as a doll on display, had just come to her from out of nowhere. It was absolutely crazy, and it had been even crazier that the ballerina's clothes fit her perfectly. It should never have worked, but she watched the wizard shake his head and walk away. Martha had never felt this clever in her life.

She waited a few more seconds, making sure he was gone, and then tried to step out of the music box. But her feet wouldn't move. She panicked, and tried to move her arms. But they were stuck to her hips. And she couldn't stop smiling!

"Oh, she's so beautiful, Grandpa," Someone said from beside Martha. "How long can I keep her?"

"For as long as you want, darling." The familiar wizard's voice replied. Martha didn't feel so clever anymore.





Found in the Attic

Gretta and her friends helped clean out Mrs. Agery's place after the old ballet instructor passed. But after finishing up the lonely attic, Gretta made the mistake of sitting in a long forgotten chair; a chair that had once been enchanted. A moment later, her elbows were locked and legs hung in the air. The new doll had the most curious look on her face and a shiny new costume.

"What is . . . wait!" Gretta thought as her friends picked up the new doll and chair and carried them down to the front yard. "Don't sell me! I'm not a doll!" The ballerina toy thought desperately. But it came to no avail as person after person looked at her, poked her, climbed in

her lap, and even knocked her over.

But it was one girl about six years old who found a shiny key next to Gretta. It was a six year old who slipped that key into the toy's back. Gretta burst with energy as the child wound the key, believing she would soon be free. And Gretta leaped up when the girl had let her go, ready to shout in joy that she was human again.

But then she started to dance and pirouette and move in ways she never could have before. And the more she danced, the more Gretta realized she would be just a toy forevermore.

Kerry's Travel Trunk

I've always wanted to travel and see the world, but never had the money. Until I found this magic trunk. If someone stands inside it and says some magic words, they'll turn into a rag doll. Hence my cute outfit.

How does that help me travel, you ask?

Easy, instead of flying or driving anywhere, I ship myself. I just get in the trunk, doll myself, and go wherever I please. I just need someone on the other side to say the reverse magic words. And finding people to be a doll for is surprisingly easy.

I stay with a host family for a few weeks, splitting my time between being a toy and going out. And I kinda love both. Weird, right?

That's what is *supposed* to happen. Except for this last trip, I got shipped to the wrong address and wound up in France. The man who I now live with doesn't know to say the magic words, even though I have them written on my trunk. And I can't come alive until he does. But he's very nice and loves to travel, too.

He just doesn't take me with him.

