



A SUDDEN REVERSAL



If there was ever a suitable representative for the phrase 'as meek as a mouse', it would be none other than *Susie*, a young lady in her senior year at highschool. Born into a rather plain family smack dab right in the middle of an elder sister and a younger brother, Susie had been left to her own devices as soon as she learned how to read and stand on her own two feet. Although she cWith her then newborn baby brother to care for and her sister needing special attention thanks to her taking the first steps into college, Susie never really got much attention, and it didn't help that she was born with a naturally robust mind that enabled her to learn fast, retaining information like an absorbent rug so she rarely if ever had a bad grade.

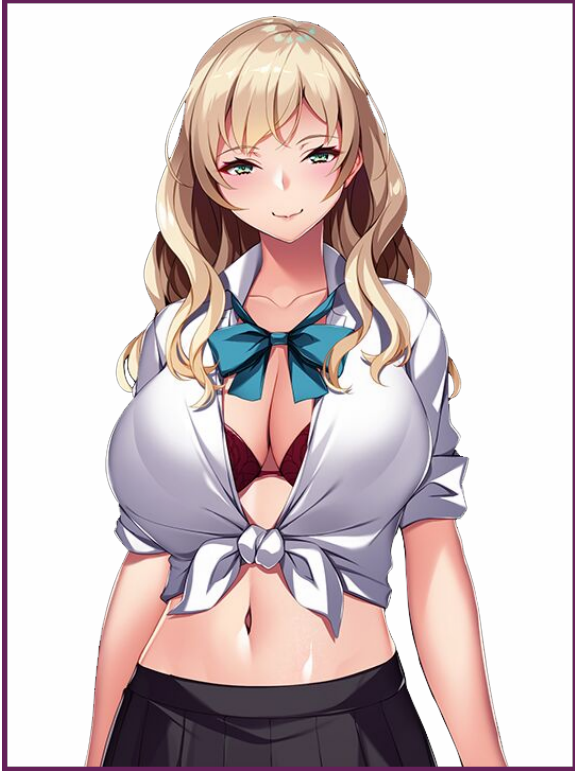
And like any good daughter, Susie knew to stay out of trouble. Avoiding the wrong folk at school. Always coming home on time, etcetera etcetera.

But in a way, she had been far too cautious, distancing herself from literally everyone else in school besides a certain someone she couldn't run from. That left her just as alone if not, worse off than she already was back at home. Without anyone to turn to for small talk before homeroom or during lunch break, Susie's self confidence and conversational skills had degraded over time, turning her into the soft spoken doe everyone knew her as.

Despite her reclusive nature however, even someone like Susie had dreams, of a sort every girl her age would begin to kindle when they were exposed to individuals of the opposite sex with a maturity enough to comprehend that tickle in their hearts and fluttering of butterflies in their stomachs. And for Susie, she had her mellow eyes set on a lad from the same class; Tim. The boy wasn't a looker, nor was he one to engage in niceties with his classmates. But his equal kindness to all was what drew Susie to him, keeping watch over him from the background and doing whatever she could to support him like cleaning up the classroom unbeknownst to him whenever it was Tim's turn for cleanup duty.

No matter how many times she had been given the chance to confess to Tim in the reassuring comfort of a private locale however, Susie could never get the words out of her mouth. Not without chattering so fast one might be afraid to let her speak lest she bite her tongue off. But Susie wasn't alone in this 'fight' to let her feelings be known whether she liked it or not. And even though this not so mysterious benefactor had put her through tons of tried and true methods for a girl to get the love of her life, Susie had gone and bungled them all, leaving her helper dumbfounded and mildly frustrated at her charge's incompetence.

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And that help came in the form of *Triss*, a girl from the complete opposite end of the spectrum when compared to Susie. Bubbly, outgoing and incredibly 'friendly' in both meanings of the word, hers was a face almost everyone in school knew for all the wrong reasons as evident in her choice of attire...but that wasn't important, at least not currently.

What was important was the fact that even with Triss' help, Susie had yet to announce her feelings for Tim. Normally, the aid provided by such a 'capable' individual experienced in the arts of love and merrymaking would've skyrocketed or even guaranteed any girl's chances at snagging their beloved. Except Susie wasn't just any ordinary girl, which made tweaking Triss' methods to aid the sheepish girl a little more challenging than she would have liked it to be.

For someone of Triss' character, helping another seemed unlikely, impossible even when it was Susie of all people she was helping. But the girl had her reasons, definitely not related to her education and the people she chose to befriend. With no one left to turn to and her grades at risk, Susie had approached Triss like a timid mouse one fine Friday afternoon when she noticed the struggling girl tearing her hair out in an isolated corner no one but her frequented.

A chance encounter that led both girls forming an unlikely friendship, one that couldn't have been bridged in any other way.

But friendship could oftentimes drive someone to do crazy things for the betterment of their peers. And in Triss' case, her bond (and mild irritation) with Susie would push her towards some very...unorthodox methods. Researching the occult, looking up cryptic forums and scouting out the local stores near the suburban areas in town that usually curated a wide selection of second hand goods ranging from mundane to exotic.

And before long, Triss' hard work would bear fruit in the form of indecipherable scribbles painted across a wrinkled sheet of mottled yellow paper that reminded her of old papyrus. It wasn't the quality of the paper that caught her eye, but rather the so-called scribbles that clued her in. A surprising turn of events considering how Triss could barely remember equations and the meaning of scientific mumbo jumbo she needed Susie to hammer into her head.

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She had initially questioned the wizened old shopkeeper as to whether or not he knew if the scroll was legitimate, but when he answered her query with a quirky *'What's an Egypt?'* The opportunistic gal quickly brushed aside the question, paying a pretty penny for the scroll before quickly making her way back home.

A little cross referencing, a bit more digging and all it served was to deepen Triss' doubts about what she had uncovered; a spell that was supposedly capable of swapping the traits of the two select souls, with the catch being that the recipient must never be informed. And all she had to do was place a sample of their hair on either end of the scroll, atop symbols that looked like flaming orbs linked together by a wavering thread.

But if it worked...if this was the real deal. Then Triss figured this was probably the best solution. With a little bit of her trademark 'lethality' when it came to striking men and curling them around her finger tips, she was sure Susie would easily be able to snag Tim once that pesky shyness of hers was dealt with. Plus she really could use a dose of brains from her anyways so it was a mutually beneficial exchange...

Unfortunately for Triss however, her worries were pointed in the wrong direction. Instead of wondering how this 'trait swap' would work and how much of either end would be swapped around, or even altered by side effects, the vapid girl wondered whether or not this was all just some elaborate joke, doubting the probability of it working but not the system itself as she smiled whimsically to herself, leering eyes gazing down upon the wrinkled scroll.

And it was the misplaced concern of a school bike that would lead to a strange turn of events from which both Triss and Susie would have no chance to walk away from unscathed once the blonde sets to work, following the instructions provided to her by what she had been able to piece together, setting everything up in the morning for the coming ritual before leaving for school, burgeoning excitement beaming from her very being.

Susie had expected her friend to divulge yet another 'tried and true' action plan to get her to confess to Tim once the final lesson for the day ended, instead, the girl would ask for a strand of hair for unknown purpose, pocketing it carefully like a hundred dollar bill before telling her to go home and rest. Leaving the frazzled girl confused and alone.

Triss' boy toys and gal pals had expected her to meet up with them for yet another round of afternoon fun, but like Susie, she would dismiss them with a hastily sent message met with the usual barrage of booing whenever she didn't turn up for their hangouts ever since getting together with Susie. Not like she cared much, especially when she had the final ingredient to trigger the ritual.

The anticipation in her heart was burning now, reminding Triss of grade school science projects where one couldn't really figure out whether they were on the right track when left to their own devices...and the outcome was either a spectacular success or disheartening failure.

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According to the instructions provided, all Triss needed to do was to ignite the scroll once the hairs of the intended targets were placed on either side, followed by what she could only assume was sleep, basically triggering the actual transfer once her mind was thoroughly sedated and left to drift in the subconscious depths. Leaving her open for the 'immaterial hands of the otherworld to mold and reshape as directed'.

'Kinky~' was all Triss had to say about the vague sentence. Unaware of the dangers related to messing with the unknown...because up to this point, magic and the occult had been a foreign concept to her, only ever seen in movies and novels that romanticized the subjects heavily. There would be no fairy godmother or jumpscare demons summoned to aid or torment the unwitting caster, just a girl and her naiveté...

A quick jog up a flight of stairs, a flick of a light switch. And Triss was back inside her room, plonking her bag down by the door before kneeling down to extract the prized treasure that was a strand of matte black hair plucked from the fuzzy head of Susie's messy hair, taking extra care to grip it tight as she scurries over toward the scroll laid out in the center of a circle scrawled on stacked sheets of paper glued and stapled together to form a makeshift platform big enough to encircle the rectangular script, laying Susie's strand down atop the right circle before palming a hand over her scalp, picking out a loose thread between her fingers before pulling hard, wincing at the sting of her hair being yanked free.

With the final piece laid out atop the scroll, all that remained was for Triss to set fire to the paper, picking up the lighter she had whiskered away from her father, taking a deep breath before depressing her thumb against the lever to produce a strong flame whose heat immediately makes itself known against the sensitive skin of her right cheek, turning it away with an annoyed click of the tongue toward the scroll, immediately igniting the entire thing in ghostly purple flame that spreads like water being poured into the floor, consuming the scroll, then the circle alongside the paper it was painted over. The process was so fast, so violent, that Triss couldn't help but let out a startled cry while tumbling backwards, scrambling away from the roaring flame as it devoured everything in its path...before dousing itself instantly once it's job was done, causing the lights overhead to flicker momentarily.

The flame was intense, so intense that by the time it died away just as quickly as it burned to life, nothing remained of the material used to summon it into existence. No ashes, no crumbs, nothing. Burned away so thoroughly that not even atoms remained to mark their former presence upon the Earth. She barely even had time to make known what she wanted the magic to transfer before the occult ensemble blew up, making her wonder if it got the message, hoping it was intricate enough to read her mind.

Triss wouldn't have much time left to ponder her thoughts when the lights in the room begin to flicker once again, but this time in a repetitive manner akin to a strobe light. And with each pulse of glaring light shot through the bedazzled girl's retinas, strength and focus would begin to leave Triss' body wracked by fatigue and mental exhaustion in just a few seconds, sending her tumbling to the floor in a limp heap, too tired to

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even move a muscle against the creeping tendrils of darkness creeping on from the corners of her eyes, the heralds of her subconscious coaxing Triss into the irresistible embrace of deep sleep.

With her mind lulled into a temporary comatose state, the wild energies that had festered for an ungodly amount of time within the paper begins to work on Triss and it's other target; Susie, who had likewise been taken into the void midway through reading a book on her bed at home. A shared realm composed of their minds interlinked by the magic as it begins the transference process based on Triss' thoughts; to trade a bit of her promiscuous self with Susie's smarts and bashfulness.

Maybe it was because of age...or maybe the people who made the scroll weren't exactly the kindest of souls, but whatever the case, things would begin to spiral out of control once the magic backfires, sputtering and sizzling as the once smooth back and forth flow of blue energy circulating between the two unconscious girls starts to burn an angry red, then a mesmerizing magenta directed towards Triss in particular with the trail connected to Susie retaining a stronger shade of blue amidst the invading crimson.

What the both of them would not be spared from however, was the physical changes beginning to take hold of their unconscious bodies as they continued to sleep, blissfully unaware of their physical shells slowly gaining (and losing) certain features they had been more than familiar with for a few years now.

In Triss' case, the tight, genetically blessed figure she had worked so hard to maintain over the years begins to loosen and fade once blubbery layers of fat begin to make themselves known. Not the firm and supple type, but rather, roiling mounds that pointed towards an unhealthy lifestyle especially prominent under her armpits and around her navel, ruining it's tone and solidity. And while Triss' gorgeous body continues to distort and fatten up, Susie would go in the complete opposite direction as the changes prioritize her attire rather than the more bodily aspects her friend was suffering from.

An obscuring long sleeved shirt far too large for the girl begins to unwind and remake itself, changing material from cheap fabric alongside splitting off into multiple layers to form a wooly, long sleeved sweater vest, plastic buttons adorning the length of their front and a cozy innerwear composed of simple linen and silk. Topped off by a flowery pink bowtie that matched the shade of both the sweater and Susie's rapidly shrinking mane of unkempt hair as a new shade of strawberry begins to seep through her scalp, dyeing it from the root until all that remained was a cute pink bob cut that curls inward nearing the bottom, accompanied by short twin braids that run down perfectly along the trimmed length of Susie's new hairstyle. Framing a face that retained some of its former mouse like quality but cleansed of blemishes like the abundant freckles that once adorned her nose line.

But a better word for that would have to be *Swapped*, because for every beautifying trait Susie seemed to gain, Triss lost hers in exchange, gaining a 'negative' but multiplied tenfold. For instance, the freckles her friend once had were now present on her face, a worn visage that had started to look like she hadn't taken a

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proper rest in ages. Except they were also beginning to emerge on engorged breasts sagging free of their skimpy bra that had been exchanged for a striped baggy shirt hanging down long enough to touch her wobbly thighs. If any one of her boyfriends saw her now, they would most likely have turned her down considering the appalling state her body was in. Triss was no longer the blonde vixen that stole leering eyes and jealous glances wherever she went, not after being reduced to looking like a depressed widow from the way her once lustrous mane now hung down around her portly, average form in long oily curtains of black with frayed edges.

Meanwhile, Susie likewise, had been rendered almost unrecognizable. She had never been a bad looker in the first place, but how? She was a bona fide cutie; dressed in a new, customized rendition of the school uniform sporting a gross abundance of pink that basically made the wearer stand out. An example of the new personality brewing within Susie's mind as almost all of her anti-social qualities fade, replaced by an outgoing individual who didn't think twice about getting herself involved with others unless they hailed from the wrong crowd. But with a big heart now freed of its restraints, Susie's reputation in the world as a quiet mouse would soon fade in exchange for that of a divine spirit who wouldn't let a frown or grimace cross her angelic features. A true friend to all that had even the bullies swooning in her presence.

As for Triss? The girl had, for all intents and purposes, taken on the mantle of the school's new recluse, except her pre-existing problems were further exacerbated as a result of the malfunctioning spell. With the loss of her beauty, Triss' reputation as the school slut was lifted off her shoulders...in exchange for becoming the school dork. A title hailing from her newfound habit of engorging herself in books ranging from novellas, manga, comics to fictional encyclopedias, no doubt magnified from Susie's love for books. But when combined with Triss' old life of debauchery, the result was a perverted dork whose only comfort was the peaceful comfort of her room, which had now become a veritable den. Cluttered with books, game casings and a bevy of sex toys that had replaced her former boyfriend's sausages she once remembered clearly.

But what had caused all this? Why did Triss seem to suffer the brunt of the magic's metamorphic touch while Susie got off just fine? Simple, the answer, lay in their fundamentals.

Triss had been a loose tramp, loose enough to be known as a 'school bike'. And even though her intentions to help her friend had come from a noble place, the indifferent forces she had summoned could not simply purify a soul so corrupt. So when the traits taken from Susie were sent over to her, the negative vibes radiating from the gal's being acted like a magnifying glass; focusing those traits and corrupting them until their host body became virtually unrecognizable. A product of her own doing.

Susie on the other hand, was pure of heart, mind and body, and that would serve the opposite effect; amplifying Triss' traits easily without repercussion alongside a generous serving of positivity. Elevating her to the current standing with which she was now known throughout her school for, her love for Tim burned brighter than before.

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By the time the flow of effervescent magic between the two changed girls cuts off, the damage, if there was any, had been done, leaving Triss and Susie irrevocably changed for better or worse as the void around them begins to fill with cracks that leak white light, slowly creeping in closer and closer until the two vanish completely, sent hurtling through the unknowable space between minds until...

"Triss!!! You're gonna be late y'hear me?! Get your butt down here and take your breakfast young lady!"

Awakening with a yelp from her bed after being shaken from her cozy slumber by an ear splitting yell delivered right into her ears, Triss scrambles off the sheets in an effort to avoid her mother's wrath, giving her slothful daughter's room a once over with a furious look before slamming the door shut as she turns to take her leave, all while panicked wheezing fills the air as the raven haired blur rushes to fetch her spectacles from the counter top, pausing momentarily once her gaze meets her reflection, slotting the thick rimmed glasses on the crook of her nose before leaning forward to take a better look at herself.

She couldn't tell what it was, but something about herself was irking her today like it never had before. Was it her eyes? No, still the same beady black orbs they always were. How about her hair? That damn conditioner her mother bought her last week only seemed to make it more oilier than before...



'A-And S-S-Sus always s-said I'd make a-a good looking g-gal...that just ain't p-possible...'

"Triss!!! Five minutes before I come up there and whack your big fat ass!!!"

"Hieeee~! I-Im c-coming Ma! I'm coming!!!"

Spurred to action and left with little choice but to obey lest she risk another ban on her freedom, poor Triss would scurry off to get changed for school, none the wiser to the old life she had unknowingly left behind for this one...

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And on the other side of town where there was still plenty of time left before homeroom began, a certain girl would already be well on her way to school, greeting her fellow students with bright smiles, curt bows and soft murmurs. Normally, she would've taken the time to engage them further in idle chatter, but today, she had an agenda in mind, something she just had to do, something she had been keeping at bay for far too long now.

Greeting the headmaster and checking in on the kindly old janitor like she usually did every morning before heading upstairs without much fanfare, Susie would make a quick beeline for the classroom, moving swiftly past a steadily growing stream of students before finally coming to stand before the sliding doors. But today, they were overbearing gates, the last hurdle that stood between her and the target of her affection.

Steeling herself with a sharp breath, Susie pushes open the door to the room, soon coming face to face with who she knew would be there alone and waiting with his bag still on his lap, clearly as excited and out of breath as she was. After all, to receive a message from one of the school's most popular girls was like being noticed by an idol! And upon the two timid souls meeting each other's gaze, the boy is the first to concede, shifting his eyes away from hers while fidgeting in his seat, an act that had the girl giggling with a warm smile on her face.

"G-Good morning S-Susie...I'm here...like you asked me to...I-last night...m-might I ask what this is...all about?"

"A pleasant morning to you too Tim...as for why I called you here...you could say it's a matter of the heart~"

"A matter of the...S-Susie?"



Sauntering over towards Tim where he sat stunned in his seat, Susie spins around the boy like a dancer doing a pirouette before coming to a stop before the windows, leaning forward in a way that emphasized her bust as she leans forward, tenting her jacket once the larger than expected melons press up against them, a sight that had Tim's blush intensifying into angry red spots on his cheeks. Even more so once her arms dart forward, taking his hands in their soft, pillowy grip without giving him a chance to say anything.

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"Tim...I've had my eyes on you for quite a long time now~"

"B-But...why me? Why not everyone else? I'm not a popular number!"

"Hee hee! That's where you're wrong Tim...besides Triss...you're the only one besides her to speak to me without the pleasantries; all that school rep stuff, none of that matters when I'm with you...and...well...I guess I also just...like you...is that good enough?"

"Is that...good enough...is it really...I'm not dreaming am I?"

Pulling Tim off his seat, Susie plants her rosy lips around his, trading her first kiss with him before parting just as quickly, a motherly smile over her serene, blushing face in comparison to Tim's flustered visage.

"Yes, silly! Is that really so hard to believe?"

But before they could continue any further the door to the room opens as the rest of their classmates pour in, quickly separating the duo before they could finish exchanging their thoughts. It was enough time however, for Susie to clench Tim's hand in her own, whispering something down his ears that had him nodding in agreement before they both parted ways...for now at least.

Susie was elated, exhaling dramatically as she makes her way toward her desk further behind the class, setting her bag down just in time for a bedraggled girl a head taller than her to come sauntering over with a sway in her step, collapsing onto the table next to her with a drawn out sigh that sounded like a deflating balloon, forcing a laugh from Susie as she ruffles her friend's wet head.

"You really should dry your hair before heading outside Triss...it's not good for your health, you might even catch a cold!"

"Mehh...I-I'll be fine...Ma was totally gonna k-kill me s-so i'm here e-early...how a-about you? L-Look like s-something good h-happened to you..."

Casting a quick glance toward Tim's back, a wry smile splits Susie's face as she ponders what was to come next once she could get to continue her confession to Tim in the privacy of the library she had quickly urged him to meet her at once lunch break started up.

"Hmhm~ I guess you could put it that way!"

THE END