

First Time For Everything, Part 2

An unknown amount of time later, Polly was startled by unseen voices.

"What did you do with her?" Insisted Steve.

"I don't know what you are talking about. I haven't seen any 'her' recently," Sarah replied. Polly could imagine the faux-innocent smile on her face.

"Sarah, don't make me angry. She didn't just walk out of my room. And only you knew she was there. What did you do with her?"

"Really, Steve, if you can't keep track of your toys, don't expect me to. What would I do with your doll?"

"Hide it from me."

"Oh, get out. Like I'm that petty," Sarah exclaimed.

Steve grumbled something and slammed the door as he exited.

Polly lost track of time again until she heard Sarah talking on the phone. It was pitch black in the bathroom and Polly wondered how late it was. If she did not get home before her mother returned from working the graveyard shift, she would be in big trouble.

"He is such a weirdo," Sarah was saying. "I swear it looks just like that friend of his. You know that mousy senior girl, Polly.

"Yeah, the damn thing is naked in my shower.

"Oh?

"I guess I could do that. Do you think it'll fit?

"Come over now and help me out. Right. Bye."

A moment later a light came on in the bathroom. Sarah pulled the mannequin out and took it back into her room.

From where she stood Polly watched Sarah go to the closet and take out a couple blankets. She turned and threw a blanket over the mannequin.

The door to her room opened and an unknown voice said, "I've got the tape."

"Start at the top and wrap the blankets around it."

Polly began to panic as the tape pressed the blanket against her. Even if she had wanted to unfreeze, she was too afraid to concentrate to bring about the change. By the time she might have been calm enough to try, the unknown assistant wrapped the tape extremely tightly around her neck. She wondered if she could breathe when she switched back. Even if she could breathe, she doubted whether she could get the blankets off.

Eventually they stopped tugging and pulling on her. It was quiet. She had not heard them leave. Shortly she heard them return. They were trying to be quiet. Polly felt her body rise and

turn on its side. They were pushing her through a tight space. As she went through she started to fall. Her landing did not hurt but she had no idea what happened when a mer fell.

A few minutes later they were picking her up again. She heard a squeaky wooden door open and they put her down.

"How about in the cabinet?"

"Perfect."

Polly felt her body picked up and placed against a wall. A door closed and then the squeaky door closed. The faint sound of a padlock clicking closed followed by the sound of laughter.

It was now or never. Polly unfroze. She was horribly constricted by the blankets. Her breathing became labored as she tried to struggle free. Sweat poured off her from the blankets. Finally she had to stop. She froze herself in as close to the same pose as possible.

She knew she would lose awareness soon. She wondered how long a mer could stay frozen as her mind drifted.

* * *

"Mom, Sarah stole my mannequin," Steve blurted out as he entered the living room.

"I did no such thing. I just saw that stupid old thing in your room when Kara left."

"Not the old one. The new one." Steve said regretfully.

"Don't tell me you wasted money on another one of those things," his mother started, disbelief rising in her voice.

"No, no. It was free. Sarah saw it in my room when you both came home and now it's gone."

"Did you see it?"

"I don't know, Mother," she began. Turning to Steve she continued, smiling, "Tell me. What did it look like?"

"It was a naked mannequin about this tall with dark hair."

"Did it resemble anyone I know?"

"What difference does that make? You know you stole it. Where did you--? No, where did you and Kara hide it?"

"Sarah, you do have it. Don't you?" her mother asked.

"Okay, I know where it is. But it could not possibly have been free since it looks just like your friend Polly."

"Did you ever think that might be a coincidence?"

"Coincidence? I didn't know mousy and sexless was all the rage in mannequins."

"I find it hard to believe there are any standard mannequins that look like Polly, too," his mother agreed.

"Well, I didn't spend any money for her so I don't care what you believe. Now where is she?"

"She?"

"She. It. What's the difference?"

"See, Mom, I think he's gone nuts over his dollies."

"They are not dollies!" he screamed.

"That's enough, both of you," their mother interjected. "Go to your rooms both of you. You will return his mannequin in the morning. And you will not say another word about it or she won't return it for an extra day for each word of protest."

He opened his mouth but stopped himself.

"Good. Now off you go. Get! And don't come downstairs until morning no matter what."

He stormed up the stairs. He stopped himself from slamming the door in case it slammed "in protest." He dropped onto his bed and looked at the ceiling.

His mind raced. How long could she remain frozen safely? What if Kara had left with Polly? How much would Polly hate him for what happened to her?

At least her new clothes should console her, he thought. She had said it was her first time. He wondered if it were also her first kidnapping.

He reached over the side of the bed for the clothes but came up empty. He sat up and looked around. The bags were gone. He searched the room. He could not even find Polly's clothes. He opened the closet door and his old mannequin was also naked.

Bile rose in his throat. It took every ounce of self-control he possessed not to storm into Sarah's room and demand the clothes back. He spent a long night seething in bed before sleep took him.

* * *

Steve came downstairs in a rush to find his mother making pancakes and his sister eating a plate of them. She was wearing Polly's new clothes.

"Where is it?" he asked cautiously.

"Eat this," his mother said, handing him a plate. "And you, answer his question."

"We hid it in the shed out back."

Before he could stand his mother interrupted, "No, finish eating so we can get to the stores and back before nightfall."

"Oh, I forgot all about shopping today," Steve said dejectedly. "Let me bring it inside before we leave."

"What? Are you worried your poor dolly will be lonely in the shed?"

"Doesn't she get punished for stealing the mannequin and for stealing the clothes I bought the mannequin. Not to mention all the other girl's clothes in my room."

"You bought clothes for the mannequin?"

"They weren't expensive. She's wearing them right now."

"When you get home you'll wash those clothes and give them back to your brother," his mother said to Sarah. Turning to Steve she added, "I haven't yet decided what her punishment should be but the missing clothes point me away from leniency. But we don't have time for you to go looking in the shed as I'm sure she didn't just prop it up in the doorway easy to get to."

It was 10 PM when they returned home and Steve was not allowed to search the shed in the dark. Steve snuck downstairs at dawn. It was Monday and he hoped he would be able to rescue Polly before she missed school. As it was, her mother could have called the police already. Opening the door to the shed, he did not see her immediately. The only thing near the door big enough to hold her was a wardrobe. Opening it he saw a bunch blankets rapped in duct tape. He was about to close the door when the shape of the blankets made him look twice. He picked up the bundle and it felt like it was the right weight and hardness.

"Polly, Polly!" he whispered insistently. "I'm taking you back to my room. It's Monday morning already."

Polly heard her name and slowly came to. She unfroze and croaked out, "I can't get free."

"Good, you are in there. Freeze again and I'll get you out as soon as possible."

The bundle firmed up and Steve picked her up and took her up to his room. He had removed half the tape by the time the door to his room opened and his mother said, "You have to leave for the bus. My, she really made that difficult for you."

"All right, let me get my stuff," he answered, frantically removing more tape. When his mother left he whispered, "I did the best I could. You might be able to struggle free. The tape around your neck is gone. Sorry."

Polly heard him walk away and close the door to his room. She immediately unfroze. Her arms were free of tape and it only took a moment to extricate herself from the blankets.

Looking around the room she could not see her clothes. In the clean corner of the room was a single piece of paper. It was a note from Steve.

"I don't know how much time I'll have in the morning so I'll tell you what I know of your ordeal. Sarah and her friend Kara hid you in the shed Saturday night. A family trip prevented me from getting you out sooner. I don't know what she did with your clothes. She even took the mannequin's clothes."

"I'll make this up to you somehow. Call your mother. She must be worried sick."

"Love, Steve"

She teared up, then laughed. "What an odd first love note!" she thought.

She was beginning to get use to being naked. She picked up the phone and called home.

"Yes?" came her mother's voice.

"Um, hi, mom. I'm okay."

"Where have you been?"

"Well," she began. "I had my first really long mer accident or should I say misadventure."

Her mother laughed, "Oh thank goodness, you're safe now. Come home and tell me all about it."

"The problem is I'm still mid-misadventure and I'm kinda' curious how it turns out."

"Where are you, honey? Are you sure you'll be alright?"

"All I need from you is a note to bring to school tomorrow excusing my absence."

"Can you at least tell me if that Steve is involved? You were supposed to be hanging out with him."

"Yes, he is involved. He and only he also knows I'm a mer. He thinks it's cool."

"Okay, call me if you need me."

"You know I will. Bye."

Hanging up, she opened the door to Steve's room. Looking around she quickly crossed the hall to Sarah's room. Inside she found the shopping bags from her shopping trip with Steve, but none of her clothes. Spying a bathrobe, she put it on. "What can I do to Sarah without getting Steve in trouble?" she thought.

In her search she found a stash of cigarettes, some alcohol, and a memory card hiding in her bedpost. She considered dumping the cigarettes and booze but figured she should look at the memory card first. She brought the memory card into Steve's room and loaded it onto his computer.

In a directory labeled Folder she found pictures of Sarah, Kara and several of her friends at a party drinking and flashing the camera. Several pictures showed Sarah touching herself and sucking on Kara's breasts.

She stopped looking at the pictures and copied them to his computer in a folder labeled Vengeance. In the process of using his computer, she found several picture directories with pictures of mannequins. Many seemed taken at a mall or storefront. All of them were tastefully photographed with an eye toward the artistry of the window display.

She carefully returned the memory card and other things to where she found them so Sarah would not know anyone was in her room. A few more minutes of looking around turned up the sundress worn by the mannequin. It fit so it was better than nothing. She spent over an hour looking over his picture collection when she had an idea.