

PETER AND LISA: PART 27

CONSTRUCTIVE (?) CRITICISM

Lisa pulls away the mask, the enveloping black cloak swirling behind her as she turns to the audience. A skeleton smoulders on the table behind her, providing flickering shadows around the stage. "They triumph!" she proclaims, her body covered in a simple loose black outfit, the leggings clinging to her. She bows.

"And that, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, is the act." Peter says, stepping out of the side of the stage.

The audience of five applauds quietly. "Come on off the stage then." Sarah smiles, "We've got the post mortem to worry about."

"Oh, that sounds promising."

"It's not that bad, scaredy-cat."

"Yeah, sis, we won't bite. Too much." Carrie beams, looking up from the cube clicking in her hands as she twists the coloured sides around.

"Very reassuring." She steps off the stage, floating down, scratching an itch on her finger.

Peter follows, walking down a flight of invisible stairs.

"Oh, don't worry. We'll be nice." Lisa's eyebrows rise, glancing across at Mark, who shrugs, his feet leaning on the seat in front, Tabby leaning her head on his shoulders,

"Assuming you deserve it, of course."

"Of course. So..."

"So."

"So, what did you think?"

"That was soooo cool. It had a story and everything. And the good guys won. Yay good guys!" Tabby gushes. Everyone turns to look at her. She looks around at them, her pale blue eyes wide, one finger hooked innocently into her lip, "Did I do something wrong?" she looks over at Mark, "I didn't, did I?"

"Tabby, I think it'd be better if you didn't say anything unless someone asks you, alright?"

"Oh, ok." Tabby nods, her smile undiminished, "Ooops. Sorry, I said something. Ooops I did it again. And again. And..."

"Tabby, I think that's enough out of you." Mark raises his hand, covering Tabby's mouth. When he pulls his hand away, the skin left behind is smooth, no trace of either the cupid's bow lips or the pearly white teeth left behind. Tabby's eyes continue to shine as she feels her new face.

"Now, Mark, that was just mean."

He shrugs, "Did that hurt, Tabby?" she shakes her head vigorously, blonde curls flying. "Did you enjoy it?" she nods, equally vigorously. "You see, Sarah, there's no problem. She enjoyed it."

Sarah sighs.

"Well, it's obvious you haven't listened to Mike, sis." Carrie interjects, looking up from shuffling the Cube's sides.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"Well, you were moving ok, but you're supposed to be the glamorous assistant, and that was not glamour."

"It's supposed to be glamorous, not glamour modelling. Which you look a lot more suited too at the moment. Been playing with Mike's presents, have you?"

"Maybe a little." she grins, taking a deep breath to further expand her double j chest, her already-straining t-shirt stretched further, "Why? Jealous?"

"Of someone who's shoved beach balls down her bra to get attention? Not hardly."

"Ooooooh, them's fightin'..."

Sarah coughs, "Play nice, both of you, or I'll send you to the naughty step until you calm down."

Carrie contritely looks down at her lap, "Yes, Supernanny Sarah."

"Getting in some practice, luv?"

Sarah smiles, "Never hurts. And don't think I won't send you there too if you misbehave, either."

"Misbehave? Me? Surely not." he leans in, kissing Tabby where her mouth was. There's a muffled squeal as her chest swells, rapidly rivalling Carrie's magically enhanced figure.

"How can she stand up like that?"

"Same way I do, sis. Magic back muscles." she winks.

"I could do with some of those." Sarah sighs wistfully, "But, back to work, and if you could possibly not piss your sister off, Caroline, what were you saying?"

"Well, the outfit's not very flattering. I know it's not really needed for us, but the assistant is supposed to be a distraction. It doesn't have to be anything too bad, sis. Just a bit tighter in the right places, a bit," she pauses, quickly glancing at Lisa for any danger signs, "well, a bit sexier. You don't have to go as far as me, as if you ever would, but it needs something more."

"Or less." Mark adds.

"But not a lot less," she adds quickly, as Lisa draws in a breath, "and you're not helping. You don't have to flash your tits to be sexy. It just helps keep the drunken students happy when they pay extra for an adult routine."

"Which we won't be."

"So there's no problem. Just something a bit sexier and figure-hugging. You can never go wrong with skintight outfits." She looks at Lisa, eyebrows just starting to arch, "Or at least something that shows off your figure."

"There, I knew you could do it. And no one got hurt or mad." She looks over at Lisa, "Did they?" she smiles sweetly, Lisa's grip on the back of the chair turning her knuckles white, the cloak hanging down around her. With some effort she releases the grip on the chair and sits down, the cloak bunching up around her.

"Is it my turn to make myself unpopular? It's too long or too short?"

"Which one, Stu? Too long? Or too short?"

"Depends what we need you for. You're too short for a headline or support act, but you're too long for an interval."

"Right."

"It's a shame to cut it down as you've got a good act with the fight sequences and the plot, but..."

"Use them as bookends rather than an interval. Split it in two. Impaled and evil vanish to start. Then you recapture her and set her on fire at the end." He shrugs. "Should solve the problem. Maybe cut a little from the main act and get Killer to sort out a 'catch and release' interval." Lisa shifts in her seat, glaring across at Mark, who leans back in the chair, his feet up on the chair in front, arm around Tabby's shoulders, his hand hanging over her swollen chest. His fingers twitch, still not touching her, and Tabby squirms. Peter puts a hand on Lisa's shoulder, giving her a gentle squeeze to calm down.

"That might work. Especially if we could weave the background into the other act."

Hmmmm, yes, it could work."

"Ahem, if you two could stop the floorshow? At least until we can get some paying customers in."

"Yes, ma'am." Mark snaps off a lazy salute, pulling his hand away, leaving Tabby looking downcast. "Guess it's my turn, right? Then we can all get on with our lives and stop holding Little Lord Fauntleroy's hand? Actually, that lot wasn't too bad. A bit over-rehearsed, but

pretty good. Got something to hold the audience's attention while you set things up. Hell, even if she doesn't dress the part, your bird looks good up there. But it's too obvious you've been practicing. You've got to let it flow a bit. Have some fun."

Lisa shifts, the cloak bunching in the small of her back. She starts to stand. "How are you supposed to sit with one of these things anyway?"

Peter smiles slightly, "Allow me." He takes hold of the cloak, twirling it around her and off. Lisa sits back down, the tight black costume replaced by the jeans and t-shirt she'd worn before changing.

"Like that! That is exactly what I'm talking about. If you two are done pretending I'm not here, you should break it up a bit. Play around. Have some fun. That is the best thing about this job, the chance to play with our toys in public."

"Toys?" Lisa asks, her eyebrow rising dangerously.

"Alright, assistants, partners, bits on the side, whatever turns you on, love."

"Ahem, well, before we get to the bloodletting, does anyone else have any comments?"

Sarah looks around the room. Tabby curls up in Mark's lap, her arms coiled around his neck, her head bowed, nestled against his shoulder. Carrie shakes her head, the cube still clicking as she flips it round. "Haven't you finished that yet?"

She looks up, "About an hour ago. But twisting it feels good. Especially if you're on the inside."

"And someone's inside?"

Carrie smiles innocently and resumes twisting.

"Well, love, do you have anything more to add?"

Stuart shakes his head, jotting notes down.

"Excellent. Well, I think I just have one thing to ask then. Where are the hunky Imperial Stormtroopers that you said would be included? I was looking forward to those."

"We'll use volunteers from the audience and pass out the masks. I'm sure we'll find some hunky ones."

"Good. Then I think you'll do fine. But we'll need to talk about the scheduling. And maybe take Mark's advice and loosen up, play a little. After all, you're not doing this for the money, are you?"

"No."

Sarah grins.

"And that doesn't mean we'll take a cut."

The grin vanishes. "I could go off you, you money-grubbing servant of Mammon."

"You wouldn't. I'm too cute and he's too nice. So we're good?"

"We're good." She puts her hand on her bulging stomach, "And Junior seems to want some attention."

"He's kicking?"

Sarah nods as Lisa puts her hands on her stomach.

"Ooooh, I can feel him. Have you thought of a name yet?"

"Ok, that's enough soppy stuff. I'm off to the bar before you bring out the scans again. Come on, Tab."



This work by [Paul Watson](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-No Derivative Works 2.0 UK: England & Wales License](#).

Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at <mailto:magicbookshelf@blueyonder.co.uk>.