

PETER AND LISA: PART 36  
"I THINK I'VE KILLED HER!"

"What do you mean you're doing a magic show at the Christmas party, Magic Boy?!"

"Have you ever tried saying no to Margaret?"

"Ok, that's a fair point, but a show?"

"She knows I do magic. It seems they're having trouble with the entertainment. So, she grabbed me and..."

"And you agreed."

"As we just agreed, it's kind of hard not to say yes to Margaret when she's in one of those moods."

"So we can't get out of it?"

"Not really. Going to be tough to do a show outside E's."

"Why?"

"E's makes things more plausible for the audience. You just accept that everything that happens is part of the show. It happened so it's obviously possible and it's a magic show so it's obviously a trick, even if you can't work out what the trick is. Out in the real world..."

"Well, that sucks."

"It does indeed."

"So why did we have to spend all our spare time for weeks practising and rehearsing if people would just take it as part of the show regardless?"

"They'd take it as part of the show. Doesn't mean they'd think it was any good."

"So, again, how can we get good enough for the show?"

"That's an..." the phone rings.

"Lisa."

"Oh, thank God, I think I've killed her. I didn't mean to, I, I, she wasn't wearing it, she always wears it, why wasn't she..." the voice on the other end of the phone snuffles.

"Killed who? Who is this?"

Another snuffle, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I didn't..."

"Who is this?"

"She said to call you if things went wrong and...oh, God, I'm sorry, and now Carrie's dead and I'm so..."

"Carrie?! She's dead? That's impossible. She can't be..."

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, she wasn't wearing it and I..." the voice trails off.

"Carrie's what?" Peter asks, pushing himself up.

"Where is she?"

"Oh, God, I'm sorry, so sorry, I..." the phone goes dead.

Lisa slowly puts it down. "She can't be dead. She can't be."

"Carrie's dead?"

"That's what she said. On the phone. That she'd killed her."

"Who was it?"

"She didn't...didn't say...just...just kept babbling." she looks up, her eyes shining bright with tears, "She can't be dead...can she?"

"I don't know. But we can find out who was on the phone."

"How?"

He picks up the phone, dialling, "Caller ID." he listens, "It's Carrie's number."

"So she really..."

"So we're going to find out."

"Find out? How do we do that? What if she's..."

Peter wraps his arms around her, kissing her forehead gently. “Shhhh. We worry about the ifs when they happen.”

“But...”

“No, no buts. We’re going to find out what’s happened.”

“And then?”

“And then, we’ll see what needs to be done.”

Lisa sniffs. “Ok. Ok. I’m ok.” She protests somewhat unconvincingly, “So, how do we find out what’s happened to her?”

“We go see her.”

“Magic door?”

“Magic door.”

“Come on, then. She could be...just come on!”

Peter opens the door, stepping out into the hallway outside Carrie’s flat. Lisa steps up to the door, banging on it hard, “Carrie? Carrie, are you in there?! Carrie!!” the door remains resolutely shut.

Peter pulls out a keyring, sliding a key into the lock, scraping it along the edges. He turns it and the door unlocks with a dull click.

Lisa slams the door open. “Carrie?! Where are you?” the hall, with its sunny yellow walls, gives no response. Neither does the mad science lounge as she barges in, one wall decorated by a human-shaped discolouration amid the cables and computers. Nor the kitchen, water marks staining the tiles around the washing machine. Only the bedroom gives any sort of reply, a strangled mix of sob and whimper coming from the heap of off-white bedding in the centre of the double bed. “Carrie?” the bedding sobs in reply, “Is that you?” she edges closer, pulling the bedding back. The pale, waif-like woman under the bed turns deep brown eyes, now made red and puffy with tears, to look at her. Brown curls fall past her tear-stained cheeks, fresh tears carving tracks across her skin.

“L-Lisa? Oh, God, I’m sorry, I’m sorry...”

“Tracy?! What are you doing...where’s Carrie?”

“She’s gone. I’m sorry, I’m so... she wasn’t wearing it, and I thought she was and I...” she breaks down in fresh sobs.

“You what? Tracy, what did you do?”

“I didn’t mean to. I thought she was wearing it...” she sniffles, “but she wasn’t and now she’s gone and it’s all my fault.”

“What’s your fault?” she sighs, “[I wish I knew what you were talking about.](#)” She feels the ring around her finger warm up, a rushing fills her ears and her vision wavers, “Oh, crap.”

And the world whirls away from her, vanishing into darkness.

She blinks, and slowly her vision returns, looking through a mist that crowds around the edges of her vision, muting the sounds from the room. Lisa rubs her eyes, but the blurriness remains. “Great. Now what’s this bloody ring done to me?” she looks around the blurred room as the pile of bedding starts to move. “Ok, so Tracy’s still here at...” she stares at the auburn hair emerging from the covers, “Carrie? Oh, God, you’re ok, Tracy said she’d...” Carrie yawns blinking sleepily and turns over, paying Lisa no attention, “Carrie?” she reaches out, her hand passing through the covers, “what the...oh, oh! I get it. I get to see what happens in soft-focus flashback. Very 80s, ring.” the ring doesn’t respond as Tracy’s head emerges from the covers. They kiss gently, lips moving in speech but no sound emerging. “Silent movie, huh? At least it’s not black and white.” Carrie rolls back in the bed. Tracy leans over her. Carrie looks up, murmuring something. Tracy bends down to kiss her forehead and stays there. Lisa moves in closer as Carrie writhes in the covers. Tracy swallows and Lisa watches her sister’s head vanish into Tracy’s mouth. “What the...she didn’t just...” she watches in a mixture of amazement and horror as Tracy continues to swallow, as more and more of her sister’s

wriggling, writhing body is gulped down, vanishing between Tracy's lips. She continues to stare in fascination as Tracy gobbles her sister up, wiping her mouth as Carrie's feet disappear. And with one final swallow, Tracy leans back, patting her stomach. She sighs contentedly and glances across at the bedside table. She pales, eyes going wide. Lisa whirls around to see what's frightening her and just manages to make out a teeth-studded leather collar before the world whirls away into darkness once more.

She blinks slowly, looking back on the room, Peter on the bed beside a still sobbing Tracy.

"You ok, Lise? You sort of spaced out for a few there."

"You ate her?!"

Tracy nods, looking up, eyes still bright with tears.

"She what?"

Lisa continues to ignore him, glancing at the bare bedside table, "Where's the collar?"

Tracy sniffs, pulling it from under the covers, "I tried it, but it doesn't work." she sniffs, "I thought, it might work even if she wasn't wearing it when I..." she trails off, "It works when she wears it to eat me, so I thought...but it doesn't..."

"Hang on, hang on, can I just make sure I've got this straight before you two go back to not making sense? Tracy, you ate Carrie?"

"Yes."

"And she wasn't wearing the collar?"

"No."

"And you ate her all in one go?"

Tracy nods.

"That's a relief then."

"That's a what? She ate Carrie and..."

"Exactly. She ate Carrie in one go. That simply can't happen without magic being involved. Therefore, as magic was involved, Carrie's probably fine."

"Probably?"

"It's always a bit iffy when you're talking about spontaneous stuff like this, but probably."

Tracy, could you put the collar on, please?"

"But it doesn't..."

"I know, but, ok, explaining it probably won't make sense, so just trust me, it'll help."

"Ok." she fiddles with the collar, slightly trembling fingers eventually getting it clasped.

"Good. Do you feel any different?"

Tracy shakes her head. "Sh-should I?"

"Not sure. Hmmm. Ok. Lise, you'd better stand back."

"Stand back? Why? What are you going to do?"

"Well, hopefully, I'm going to get Carrie back."

"And I have to stand back because...?"

"Because there might be a little bit of a backlash and I'd rather you weren't caught in it."

"Oh. Right." she backs up slowly.

"Now, how do you and Carrie usually handle this?"

"Well, uhm, I usually come out of, well, that is, uhm, she..."

"And when you eat Carrie?"

"Oh, she sort of comes out of my stomach. But she's usually out by now and..."

"That's ok. Now, this might sting a little, but it, hopefully, should bring her back. Can I proceed?"

"With what?"

"Oh, sorry, thought it was obvious. I need to reach into you and pull Carrie out. It might be uncomfortable and I need your permission."

"Oh, oh, yes, you can, if you get her out, you can."

"Ok. Take a deep breath and brace yourself." He places his hand on Tracy's bare stomach.

"Ready?"

She nods, and gasps, grimacing as he pushes his hand through her skin.

"Ok, that's it. We're getting there. I can feel something. This will be unpleasant, though. May I?"

Tracy nods, staring down at him and Peter's arm pushes in up to the elbow. She moans as the prickling around her stomach turns into a muscle clenching ache.

"Ok, almost there. Annnnd, gotcha!" he pulls his hand out drawing a lightly tanned hand with it. Tracy continues to moan as an arm follows, then a head and slowly Carrie draws forth.

"Maaan, that was a rush! I can't..." she stops, seeing Peter holding her hand, "Peter? What are you doing here? And, ack!" she jerks her hand back, throwing her arms across her chest.

"OhGodyou'realrightI'msorryIdidn'tmeanitbutIthoughtI'dohthankGodyou'reok!" Carrie almost stumbles forward as Tracy throws her arms around her, sobbing as she holds on tight.

"Ok, seriously, explanations would be good now."

"Well, Tracy ate you.." Peter starts, looking aside.

"No kidding. And you're here because..."

"Because you weren't wearing your cannibal collar..."

"Of course, I wasn't. She.."

"And neither was she."

"was, huh? She wasn't wearing the collar? So how did she? I mean, it didn't feel off at all, so how...?"

"And then she couldn't restore you, so she called me."

"So you restored me?"

"Yes."

"And if you hadn't?"

"Well, you'd either have been lost or digested. I'm really not sure."

Tracy gives a strangled sob at that.

"Smooth, Magic Boy, very smooth."

"Or someone else would have restored you."

"So, that means," she takes a deep breath, "that means I owe you my life, right?"

"Technically, I suppose."

"So I owe you a Life Debt, right?"

"Carrie, there's no need to..."

"Right?"

"Yes, I suppose. We'll talk about that later."

"Ok."

"Make an appointment with Doctor Baker, too."

"Do I have to?"

"You got eaten without a collar. Yeah, you have to."

"As you command."

"Command? What's going on, Magic Boy?"

Peter sighs, "I'll explain in a minute. You two be careful, ok? Let's go, Lise." he takes her arm, leading her out of the room.

"Oh, God, I'm, you're, I'm so..."

"Shhhhhh. It's ok, Trace, really, it's ok, I'm ok. It's all ok.\*

"Let's leave them to it, shall we? If she's anything like her sister, she won't want anyone around for making up."

"I heard that." Lisa huffs as he stops to grab the rolled up black portal and continues on to the doorway home.

A few moments, and several miles later, as Peter closes the doorway, "Ok, Magic Boy. Explain."

"Ok. You know how some Native American tribes had a tradition that if you save someone's life, they owe you until they save your life?"

"Yeeesssss..."

"Well, we have something similar."

"So Carrie owes you?"

"Yup."

"And that explains the 'command' bit how? This isn't another way for you people to get slaves, is it?"

"Uhm, kind of."

"What?!"

"Technically, until the debt's paid off, Carrie has to, well, sort of, ok, she's got to obey me until she's out of the debt. Don't give me that look, I tried to tell her she didn't need to."

"You couldn't have said 'no'?"

"No, not really. Well, ok, I could have, technically, but she was insisting. It would have been bad to refuse."

"So instead you get to own my baby sister?"

"Not own, no."

"She just has to obey you?"

"Pretty much."

"Until?"

"Until the debt's been paid."

"Which will be?"

"Some kind of great service, saving my life, obviously. It's not something I can just write off, Lise. A Life Debt is a big thing. If I let it go for something trivial, I'm saying that's all her life's worth. So yeah. Could be a while."

"Marvellous. You do anything to abuse this, Magic Boy, and..."

"Lise, please. You know me better than that. Now, how did you know Tracy'd eaten her?"

"Don't change the subject."

"Don't avoid the question then. It was when you spaced out, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"And you, what, saw what happened?"

"Yes. Like a bad 80s flashback. All soft focus and silence."

"And you don't know how?"

She quickly flashes a glance at the ring, "No."

He sighs, "Ok. If it happens again, let me know. You really shouldn't be able to do this yet, you know."

"More trouble?"

"Possibly."

"Why? It's not like I'm doing anything..."

"Except possibly spying on someone important?"

"Oh."

"Exactly."

"Marvellous. That's all I need." she turns away, muttering, "I'm going to kill that little fairy..."

Somewhere else entirely, a pool of water dissolves into silence, “Well, that's charming. I love you too, dear.”

**“Her entire family is trouble.”**

“Oh, give it a rest. I like her sister.”

**“You would.”**

“Well, she reminds me of my wilder, younger days before I got responsible.”

**“And when did you get responsible, exactly?”**

“I think it was just after I got married to you, dear. Although why I did that I'm still not sure.”

**“So, as usual, it's all my fault?”**

“Exactly, dear. I knew you'd understand eventually.”

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