

THE EASTER BUNNY

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Lisa hears the phone ring. It's Good Friday and the morning, so she really doesn't want to be up, but she can't reach the phone from her bed and she reckons she'd better answer it. She manages to get halfway across her bedroom when the ringing stops. "Hello?" she hears Ola say through the door. "Oh, hi. Yeah, yeah, not too bad. I'll just see if she's up. Don't hold your breath." She opens the door gently, "It's for you."

"Who is it?" Ola smiles.

"You'll see."

"O, I'm tired, who is it?"

"You'll see."

"Fine. But I'm going to get you for this." She snatches the phone, "Hello?" she snaps sharply.

"Halloooooo." A voice coos down the phone, "This is the Eeeeaster Booonny." Lisa sighs heavily.

"Hello, Peter."

"How'd you know it was me?"

"Who else do I know who's certifiable?"

"Hmmmm, you, Ola, Carrie, half the people you work with, according to you, anyway. If you give me a while, I'll come up with some more."

"I meant, how many would phone up and pretend to be the Easter Bunny?"

"I am the Easter Bunny." Peter protests, "I've been roped into doing this at the local holiday club for the children. But I've managed to get them to give me some spare Easter Eggs. I'll just pop them over and pick you up, OK?"

"Pick me up?"

"I think I've fixed your light sabre. I just want you to try it out, see if there's anything amiss."

"You wouldn't happen to have an ulterior motive, would you?"

"Possibly."

"What?"

"I'll tell you when we're back at my place."

"Fine."

"See you in a bit, Lise."

"Yeah, bye."

“So, what’s Peter want?”

“If I tell you to mind your own business, will you?”

“Not a chance, L. Not a chance.”

“Fine. He’s been roped into being the Easter Bunny at some kid’s club, and he’s managed to wangle some free chocolate out of it. He said he’d be over, and then he’s taking me out.”

“Again? You two have been out more times the Jordan’s tits since Valentine’s Day, and you were gone all weekend then!”

“Maybe we’re in love?”

“Maybe, and maybe I’m the Easter Bunny.”

“No, the Easter Bunny was on the phone just now. He said so, remember?”

“And you won’t tell me where you’re going? Or what you’re doing? As if I couldn’t guess.”

“Nope.”

“Fine. I’ll just get Peter to tell me.”

“And you think he’ll tell you if I won’t?”

“Of course.” She grins, “No man can resist my charms.”

“He’s done pretty well so far.”

“As far as you know.”

“Sorry, O, but I can trust Peter not to stray. Even if I can’t trust you not to tempt him.”

“Well, if he turns up and finds you looking like a scarecrow that’s been dragged through a hedge a few times, and me dazzling as always, I wouldn’t be so sure.” Lisa responds eloquently, sticking out her tongue.

Half an hour later, she’s showered, dressed, made herself up, eaten (but not too much) and is now slumped on the sofa, reading. The doorbell rings. She races Ola for the door, opens it and collapses into a fit of giggles. Peter scowls at them both as Ola joins her. He’s dressed in a big, fluffy, white rabbit’s costume; the huge head mask flopped over his back. “I’m off, then. No chocolate for you two.” Lisa noticeably tries to stop laughing, wiping tears out of her eyes. Unfortunately, as Peter turns she sees the fluffy white cottontail stuck onto the costume and bursts out laughing again.

“Don’t be ridiculous, Peter. Have you seen yourself in that thing?” She manages to gasp out. “Come in.” Peter slouches in, carrying a small wicker basket with half-a-dozen chocolate eggs in it. Ola pulls a camera out of her room and gets a picture of Lisa arm in arm with the scowling Easter Bunny. Peter undoes his costume and clambers out.

“Now, I should ask if you two are good girls and deserved these, but my reception sort of gives me the answer.”

“Peter...”

“Fine. All right. You’ll get your chocolate. Any preferences, Ola?”

“Not really. All chocolate is good.” Peter picks up the eggs, juggling all six for a few seconds before he tosses two out of the set to Ola. The first catches her completely by surprise and hits her in the stomach. She catches the second, though, the chocolate shell breaking in her hands. “No fair. Warn a girl next time, willya?”

“Sure. Next time I’m dressed as the Easter Bunny and juggling Easter Eggs, I’ll warn you before I throw them to you.”

“At me!”

“To you.” He turns to Lisa, “You want yours now, or are you prepared to wait?”

“One now, one later.” Peter catches the eggs and puts two back in the basket. He tosses one to Lisa and breaks the other open for himself.

Fifteen minutes later, they walk down to his car, “You drove all the way here in a rabbit suit?”

“No. I drove here normally, and changed back into the suit before I came up.”

“So you knew how we’d react?”

“Lisa, I was dressed as the Easter Bunny, for God’s sake. Of course, I knew it was funny. You didn’t really think I was upset, did you?”

“With you, I never know.” He grins.

“Glad to see you’ve realised that.”

Back at Peter’s flat, he pulls out the remaining two eggs. “I’m not hungry.” Peter smiles his sinister smile.

“Oh, it’s not for you. The egg’s carnivorous and it’s getting hungry.”

“The egg’s carnivorous? And you want to feed it what?” he smiles, “Me?! Peter, you had better be kidding.”

“Well, it’s not really that hungry, I’ll admit.”

“Peter, I am not going to let a chocolate egg eat me, regardless of how hungry it is.”

“You’ll be fine. It hasn’t got teeth, it’ll just swallow you.”

“Peter, I don’t know how to break this to you, but the egg is only a few inches long, and I’m nearly six feet. It’ll never fit me inside.”

“Care to bet on that?”

“What are the stakes?”

“If I’m right, I get to do a trick on you, without telling you what I’m doing. If you win, I’ll treat you to dinner for a whole month and only do magic if you ask me.”

“Sounds fine.”

“Shake on it?” she takes his hand. “You do realise you’ve just made a bet with me that the impossible isn’t going to happen? And this is after I’ve sawn you in two a few times.” He shakes his head sadly.

“Of course I know that. But a carnivorous chocolate egg swallowing me whole, that’s just ridiculous.” Peter hands her the egg.

“Just unwrap it and we’ll see how ridiculous it is.” Lisa peels away the foil wrapping. The egg sits on her hand. It doesn’t move.

“See? I think I win.”

“Maybe. Put it down and step on it, would you?”

“Fine. If it’ll make you happy.” She puts the eggs down and puts her foot onto the egg. The two halves slowly open and close like a vice around her ankle. The chocolate convulses and Lisa’s booted foot vanishes. Lisa tries to shake the egg off, but it doesn’t move. Her foot feels like its been dipped in warm, soft chocolate. She tries to kick it with her other foot, only to have the egg swallow that as well. Slowly the egg crawls up her legs, swallowing more of her into itself. Lisa tries to prise the chocolate jaws open with her hands, but the egg is completely immune to her efforts. Despite the impossibility, the small egg swallows her up to the knees and keeps coming. At her waist, the egg stops, a small brown Easter egg with a ‘mouth’ the size of her waist. Lisa breathes a sigh of relief. “Told you it couldn’t...” the egg starts up again, crawling over her stomach, pulling her into its warm, chocolaty insides. “Hold on, how am I going to breathe inside this thing?”

“You’ll be fine, Lisa. Trust me.”

“I don’t have a lot of choice at the moment, do I?” she mutters as the eggs gulps down her chest. At her shoulders, the egg again pauses, and then gulps her down to the neck, forcing her arms up over her head. Lisa’s mouth and chin slides into the chocolate maw, followed by her nose and then the rest of her head, leaving just her arms outside. Inside, she finds that breathing is easy, but that everything smells and tastes of chocolate in the warm darkness. Her arms are sucked in and the egg closes up.

Lisa feels her skin start to tingle and hears Peter say, “Guess I win, after all.” although he sounds faint and muffled by the chocolate between them. Then the darkness breaks as Peter’s fingers crack open the egg. Lisa looks at his huge hands, the smell of chocolate still surrounding her. Peter lifts her out of the egg and Lisa uncurls. She stops, staring down at her hands. Instead of her normal pale skin, she’s staring at smooth hands of a rich, chocolaty brown that doesn’t really occur in people.

“Peter, you’d better not have done what I think you have!” her tiny voice squeaks.

“What do you think I’ve done, Lisa?”

“You’ve turned me into a bloody chocolate! Haven’t you?”

“Yup. Of course, I have. And the trick isn’t over.”

“What do you mean ‘the trick isn’t over’?” Peter smiles, “You wouldn’t!”

“Care to make a bet on that?”

“No way!”

“Good. You still haven’t paid off the last one.”

“What?! I’m a bloody sweetie and you don’t think I’ve ‘paid off the debt’ yet!”

“That’s right. After all, what happens to sweeties in the end?”

“Peter, don’t you dare!” he lifts her towards his mouth and dangles her above it, setting her gently swinging.

“Peter, I’m warning you!!” Peter licks the chocolate soles of her boots and Lisa starts giggling. “Peter...” Peter bites her feet clean off. Lisa yelps. Peter swallows. “Peter! I can’t feel my feet!”

“Don’t worry. This is just a slow vanish. When I bite a bit off, it vanishes. You didn’t really think I’d eat you, did you?”

“I don’t know what I thought. But you could have warned me!”

“Could have, but the deal was I don’t have to tell you anything. Anyway, that egg was more than enough chocolate for me for today.” He bites her legs off at the knees.

“Get it over with, will you, you twisted bastard?” Peter takes another bite, leaving her without legs. He turns his attentions to her arms, gulping them each down in one go. It doesn’t take long for Lisa to be reduced to just her head. Peter balances her on his thumbnail.

“Ready for a ride?”

“What?” Peter flicks her into his mouth like a peanut and swallows. Lisa plunges into darkness.

Peter walks casually into the magic room and pulls out his top hat from beside Lisa’s light sabre. He reaches in, pushing his arm up to the elbow and feeling around. He finds what he’s looking for and pulls his arm out, supporting a brilliant copper-furred rabbit with brilliant green eyes. The rabbit’s nose twitches. “Peter. This really isn’t funny. Change me back. Now. Or we’ll see just how sharp these teeth you’ve given me are.” Peter grabs her by the scruff of her neck, pinching a roll of flesh in his hand.

“I don’t think so. I haven’t had a pet in years.”

“PET?!! PET! When I get back to normal, Peter...”

“It’ll be when I want you to. Under the terms of our bet, there wasn’t a time limit. I could keep you like this for years.” Lisa struggles, squirming, kicking and biting. “All right, all right. I’ll just put you back in the hat. You’ll be back out in no time.”

“I’d better be.” Peter gently places her into the hat and turns it upside down. He taps it, copper smoke lifting it into the air. There is a quick flash and the hat sits on Lisa’s red hair. “That’s better. Now, as for...” she stops as her whiskers twitch by her cute pink nose. She licks the fur around her mouth and her tongue encounters large teeth. Her eyes narrow as she looks in the mirror. Under her clothes, her body is covered in soft copper fur. Her eyes glare out over a rabbit-like mouth. She takes the hat off and a pair of long ears flops forward. Very slowly, she half turns and stares at the fluffy white cottontail poking out of her jeans. She turns to face Peter, her emerald eyes blazing. She notices her light sabre on the trolley and snatches it up, a brilliant shaft of blue leaping out.

“Oh my God, it’s Usagi Yolisa!”

“Peter, darling,” she smiles, and her nose twitches madly, “you now have a choice. You can change me back, immediately, or you can start running. I’ll even give you a few seconds to decide. Five, four, three...” Peter turns and runs.



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