

CRAZY GIRLS
by pwatson1974

“Und now, we give send off for local landmark, yes. Riviera closing. So sad. End of Crazy Girls, yes. Still, have own crazy girls to make tribute.”

Jackie, Petra and Zilvie smile, facing the audience in teeny colour coded bikinis, in shiny emerald green, sky blue and royal purple, posing beside a wide metal frame. They strut over to the frame, forming a line with Petra towering in the centre, her arms around the others shoulders as they grasp the frame with one hand and link arms behind her back with the other. There's a cheer from the audience as some recognise the pose from the front.

“Is nice view, yes?” Faustus pulls on a cord, a cover rolling down to hide them from view. “Still is something wrong, yes?” Another tug and the curtain falls away to reveal the three facing the back of the stage, Zilvie and Jackie swapping places in the instant they were hidden. “Is better. No ifs and ands, yes?” He pulls on another cord and another thin curtain slides down, barely reaching the floor before he tugs again and sends it falling away from the bronze statues standing within the frame. “Fitting tribute to demise of local legend, yes?” the audience applaud as the curtain falls.

Backstage, “So, are you planning to turn them back before or after I get a hernia?”

“Hmmm, probably after.”

“Thanks for nothing, boss. Do something or I'll sic Sam on you.”

“Hey, no need to get nasty now.”

“Yeah, there is, they weigh a ton like this!”

“If you keep me safe from Sam, I won't tell Jackie you said that.”

“Come on, Boss...”

“Ok, ok...wuss.” he looks around, gestures at the triune bronze statue and lets it shrink away until it would be comfortable on a desk, picking it up casually. “See, not heavy at all.”

“Yeah, yeah. So when are you planning on turning them back?”

“Once we're back in the van. Well, except Petra. After all, this was all her idea. Might as well let her enjoy it.”

“She as lucky as the originals?”

“Marcel, I'm shocked, shocked I say, and you a married man with a child on the way.”

“Yeah, yeah, sure you are, boss. Now get out of here so I can get things cleared up.”

The Office, “Yes, I quite understand. Thank you for your time.” Sam puts the phone down, and crosses another line off a list with many more lines than unlined names. “Another one bites the dust.” She looks up as the door opens and Paul walks in, placing a small statuette on the desk.

“Awww, a new paperweight for me, boss, you shouldn't have.”

He smiles, “I'm going for a shower, Don't lose it before I get back. And don't abuse them too badly.”

“Only too badly?” she looks down at the tiny bronze women, rubbing her hands in mostly mock evil glee. “Ok, I promise not to break anything.”

“Close enough.”

“But we do need to talk...about the other show.”

He stops at the door. “What about it?”

“Getting bookings. A new show is tough enough without paying a lot coverage but the MagiciAnne show has a reputation from her disappearance. I can hardly tell them that it's ok, she won't make herself vanish without a way back this time, can I?”

“No, that probably wouldn't sound great. So, what's the plan?”

“Plan?”

“There's a reason I asked you to manage the business parts, Sam. You're better at it than I am. I mean, this place already looks like a real office and not a paper dump.”

Sam sits a little straighter at the praise, “Ok, boss, I'll think of something. It's not hopeless. We've

got some bookings but nowhere that'd help with money."

"Ok. I'll have a think. See if I can inspire you. After a shower."

"Right. See you later, boss." the door closes. "No problem. Persuade Vegas club owners to take a chance on a 'flaky' act. Hah! And after that, I'll Ocean's 11 every casino in town."

A few minutes later, the door opens again, "Yes, I understand. Yes, thank you for your time." she puts the phone down, crosses another name off the list, pulls a new piece of paper out from under the bronze paperweight and looks up. Her face tightens. "Oh, it's you."

"It's me." Dell agrees.

"Can this wait? I'm busy."

"I guess. Can I help?" she looks down at the sheet of names.

"I doubt it."

"That's a lot of crossed out names. Can't hurt to..."

"Fine. Just be quiet."

Dell pulls a finger across her mouth to zip it up as Sam reaches for the phone.

"Hello, this is Samantha Hill, representing the MagiciAnne show, could I talk to the booker please?"

"Hey, I know that name."

"Shhhh!" she hisses, hand over the phone, "Ah, hello, Mr Vincenzi, I...oh, you've already heard. Yes, I understand. I...hey!" Dell snatches the phone away.

"Hey, Uncle Vinny! How are you doing? It's been aaaaages. Uh huh, he's doing fine. Yes, I know, but you know what he's like. Thinks I'm made of china. No, no, I'm not in any trouble, why would you think that? Listen, Uncle Vinny, you know the MagiciAnne show...uh-huh, uh-huh, well, you see, I'm kind of working for her. Yes, me. Working. It's not that funny! Yes, I know, that's why she's got someone responsible to help her out, uh-huh, yes, obviously I mean me, although we do have professional managers as you heard. Yes, she's very good at keeping me in check. Yes, I know, Uncle Vinny, but if this works, it could be big things for me and...I know, I know, but it couldn't hurt to give us a chance, could it? You will?! Oh, thank you, Uncle Vinny, thanks a million and a half. Yes, yes, I'll put the nice professional woman back on the line. Love you. Love to Auntie Crystal, too."

She hands the phone back and starts absently rubbing the bronzes as Sam talks business and money and slots and all that other boring stuff.

Finally, "Yes, Mr Vincenzi, I'll make sure the paperwork is with you. And yes, I can assure you there will be no problems. Yes, I understand. Thank you, Mr Vincenzi." she puts the phone down.

"What do you think you were playing at?!"

Dell looks up, "Helping? It worked, didn't it?"

"You can't just, that is totally unprofessional and..."

"Sorry. I just wanted to help."

Sam takes a deep breath through her teeth, and then another, and another, "It helped. No one would take the act on. And then you come in and in five minutes..."

"Well, you know what they say, 'It's not what you know in this town, it's who you know'." she looks at the list, "Hey, I know some of these guys. Do you want me to..."

"No, thank you."

"It's no trouble. I want to..."

"No."

"But I just want to..."

"I don't need your..."

"Yeah, you do. You just..."

"Go away."

"But I'm just trying to..."

"Out!!!"

"Jeez, ok, ok, I'm going." She slams the door behind her, "Bitch."

Anne's room, "...I was just trying to help. She didn't have to be so nasty about it."

"Ya was just tryin' ta help? By showin' her up in front a' the client?"

"I didn't...crap, I did, didn't I?"

"Yeah, ya did. Still, got us the gig, so ah can't be too mad at ya. An' it's not as if Sam's short on practice at dislikin' ya anyways."

"I was trying to help!"

"An' ya did. Ya just pissed her off'n the process. It happens. Actually help next time, don' just take over like ya're God's gift an' it'll go better. An' for Goddess' sake try an' sort the helpin' out beforehan' not just bargain' in. Ya're makin' me the responsible one an' that is a crime against nature in itself. Guess mah family was right about me."

"I still don't see why we can't do some of the clubs. That's a great place for starting acts to get an early booking. We're sorta short-circuiting the system."

"Well, probably because the clubs're strip clubs."

"And? They've got guy strippers these days."

"Yeah, that's the problem with it, ah'd be reckonin'."

"I am not seeing a problem." Dell replies.

"Yeah, ya are. Ya ain't stupid enough not ta."

"Oh, come on, I've seen boy parts before! I'm sixteen in Vegas, for fuck's sake. It's not like I'm some shy, abstinence-only, pure-as-the-driven-snow know-nothing from some uber-religious family in the Bible Belt!"

"Boss takes his responsibilities serious, though. An' besides, ah ain't sure ya're really ready fer those clubs."

"Already been to 'em." She smirks, "Some of my babysitters were very naughty and got me in backstage when Dad was late back and they needed to go to their main job."

"Yeah, an' backstage is pretty safe. Bouncers an' lots a' folks. Out in the club, different thing altogether. For one thing, yore arse'll be black an' blue first day out."

"Huh?"

"Yeah, what ah figured. No idea what ya'd be lettin' yaself in for."

"And how old were you when you started there?"

"Me? Oh, ah was at least 17 an' lied mah ass off ta be older. But we ain't talkin about me. Whether it's fair or no, whether ya like it or no, boss said no an' that means no."

"So stupid." Dell replies petulantly, folding her arms, "It's not as if I'm some shrinking violet. I know what goes on. It's not as if I haven't already had sex!"

Anne shrugs, "An' ah think ah'll be leavin' the boss t' deal with that. Way over my pay grade. Life ain't fair. An' it don't have ta make sense, neither. Not as if ya'll change his mind."

"Yeah, I guess. Maybe..." she smiles to herself and glances away.

"Maybe what?"

"Nothing. You're right."

"Tells ya can see from space, ah tell ya. Whatever ya're up ta, I know nothin' about it."

"I'm not up to anything!" she protests.

Anne sighs wearily, "Really? Ok, let's see if'n ah can figure this out. Talkin' about not changin' the boss' mind an' ya smile like that. Figure ya got some special way a' changin' it as ya ain't gonna do it with an argument. So, as ah ain't taught ya that sorta thing, ya're thinkin' a' using yore little black rock ta do it." She looks up at Dell's gaping mouth, "Yeah, what ah figured. Really wouldn't recommend it. 'Part from the obvious lack a' trust an' invasion a' personal space that'd cover, ya don't know it even can. An' if it can, ya ain't got no clue how to get it ta work."

"But..."

"Sides, if ah can figure all that out from one look, ya ain't a good enough liar ta keep it up. Boss might not notice, but Jaks would. An' she'd take that kinda thing personal."

"Yeah, but I could..."

"If ya're that desperate ta see guys and girls in the buff, ah can just spell ya inta somethin' portable."

she tilts her head, looking at Dell, “Maybe a ring so that stone gets some airtime, heh, or maybe ah can get me one of the Ballys' outfits for the gig: hundreds a' rhinestones coverin' absolutely nothin'.”

“Spell me into something...” there's a significant pause, “why aren't you teaching me that stuff?!”

“That eagerness there? That's pretty much exactly why ah ain't teachin' it ta ya yet.”

“That's so unf...yet?”

Anne looks down at her wrist, “Hmmm, new record. Ya're getting' better at pickin' up subtlety. An' when ya're able ta give as good as ya get? Keep thing's quiet and subtle? Then, Grasshopper, ya might be ready ta learn the really fun stuff.”

“And when will that be, oh wise one?”

“Ah, dunno, ya seen Satan shoppin' for skis lately?”

“That's...”

“Ya wan't ta learn the good stuff? Stop complainin', start showin' ya can be trusted with semi-phenomenal nearly-cosmic power an' we'll see.”

“What happened to subtle?”

“There's a time for subtle, an' there's a time for clockin' ya round the head with a clue-by-four. Bein' a teacher means knowin' which is which. Now, show me ya learnt somethin' from the last time an ah might teach ya a new shiny.”

“Shiny? I'm not a magpie.”

“Fair 'nuff. If ya'd rather, show me some stuff or maybe ah'll spell ya after all. Teachers also need ta know carrot an' stick.”

Some time later, “Ok, boss man, we're headin' out ta get me acquainted with our new employer.” she walks past the statue of Petra, arms still outstretched, although no longer attached to Jackie or Zilvie, its face against the corridor wall. Anne briefly rubs a hand over it's shiny butt.

“Don't do anythin' I wouldn't do!” a voice calls from deeper in the van.

“Don't cover much, Jaks! Come, Minion”

“Apprentice!”

“Not outside these four...ish walls.”

“Assistant then!”

“Eh, minion, assistant, apprentice, all mean the same thing: All work an' no pay. Now move it.”

Dell grumbles, bags slung over her shoulder as she staggers past the statue, pausing to rub it. “Make me lucky.” she whispers. “Make this work.”



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