

Petra locks the last of the metal bands closed. "Not too tight are they?"

Dell tries to pull on the metal bands shackling her to the table in a cruciform pose. "They're fine. I've been tied up tighter before. Just doesn't do much for me."

"But you're..."

Dell smirks, "Please, you think True Love Waits suits me?" Petra colours, "You did? Sorry to disappoint."

"Moving right along." Petra picks up a thick tube attached to an assortment of cables and wires.

"Where's the boss? Shouldn't he be doing this?"

"It's fine, he's just checking the props with Marcel. This stuff is pretty easy to use, really."

"Oh, really?" she grins, "I'll have to try that later for myself."

"Huh?"

"Nothing. What's going to happen to me this time?"

"Nothing much, hon. Just a little division."

Dell tries to look round, but the padded band on her forehead puts a stop to that pretty quickly, "I didn't see any blades. They're not going to pop up from this thing, are they?"

"Nope. I've got the blade right here." She holds up the tube.

"That? How is a psycho fire hose supposed to cut me?"

"It's a laser, silly."

"A laser? That thing? You're not serious."

"Why not? Haven't you heard of fibre-optic cable?"

"Yeah, yeah, I'm from Missouri. Show me."

"Okies." Petra pushes a BRB (Big Red Button) on the two-foot plastic tube. A low hum emerges as the long cable glows. "Pretty."

Dell rolls her eyes, "You're sure you're safe with that thing?"

"I'm sure." Petra pulls on a pair thick black goggles, "After all, I'm not the one strapped to the operating table."

"What?!!" Dell tries to struggle, but the sheer number of metal bands keeps her perfectly still.

"Relax. This won't hurt. Besides, you said 'yes'."

"Like I had a choice." Dell mutters as a red beam leaps out of the tube, cutting into her waist. She sucks in

her breath as the red light cuts through her like a hot knife through butter, leaving just a feeling of warmth sinking through her waist.

Petra pushes the BRB and the laser vanishes. “How was that?” she asks, pushing up the glasses.

“Better than your last brilliant idea.” Dell replies, her eyes still closed.

“I just thought you’d appreciate the chance to get a different perspective.”

“Oh, I did. Very useful. Thanks. Next time I’m a fucking frog, I’ll remember it.”

“Oh, I almost forgot.” She reaches for a button on the stand next to her.

“Forgot what? What are you doing?” A metallic, grinding rumble echoes through the room. “What’s that? What are you doing? What’s going on??” the noise stops.

“It’s just the table moving. It’s way too heavy for me to move on my own.”

“Great. So when am I getting put back together? You’re not going to leave me like this all night like the bitch queen from Hell, are you?”

“Oooh, I’ll tell her you said that.”

“So? It’s not like she can hate me any more than she does already.”

“Well, that is true, I suppose.”

“So, how long?”

“Oh, not long.” She pushes the goggles down, “When I’m finished.”

“Finished? What do you mean...” Petra pushes the BRB and Dell yelps as the red light carves through her neck. Another push, seconds later, and the beam comes off. Petra pushes another button and the Dell shudders as the table grinds apart, pulling her head away from her shoulders. “Oh, great. It’s going to be one of those. What is it with you and cutting me to bits?”

Petra chuckles, “I dunno, hon. It just feels so good when it’s done to me, I figure why not spread the love.”

“You can stop spreading it this way quite so much.”

“Oh, no, I couldn’t do that, hon. You’d miss out on the fun.”

“I could do with a bit less ‘fun’ sometimes.” Dell mutters, as the beam cuts its way through her side, dividing her stomach from her chest before it flicks out.

“Did you say something, hon? I know this doesn’t make a decent zapping sound like a proper laser should, but the hum’s pretty loud over here.”

“Nothing.” Petra moves to stand at Dell’s feet. “You even think about it and I’ll catch you when you’re sleeping.” Dell snarls, trying to look down her divided body without being able to tilt her head at all.

“Ooooh, promises, promises. But that’s not why I’m here. Close your eyes.” Dell closes her eyes and feels the laser make two swift slices in her shoulders. She feels the warmth glowing as the table grinds underneath her.

“Where the hell did you get this piece of Transformer furniture?”

“Haven’t a clue, hon. The boss handles most of that stuff. Probably conjured it out of thin air.”

“Yeah, sure. Let me guess, that thing’s going through my legs next, isn’t it?”

“Awww, you guessed.” Petra pouts.

Dell rolls her eyes, “I’m a teenager, not stupid. Unlike some people.”

“I heard that.”

“So? Who said I was talking about you? Guilty conscienceep!” she yelps as Petra throws a black cloth over her left leg.

Petra walks up to her waist and Dell feels the tip of the laser pressed into her hip. “Enjoy.”

Dell yelps again as the laser stings into her leg, burning its way through, severing her leg from her hips. The laser clicks off, the burning heat fading to the warm glow along her other cuts. “That hurt!”

“Serves you right, calling me stupid.” Petra replies as she covers the severed leg with the black cloth, “Besides, it’s stopped hurting now, hasn’t it?”

“How did you?”

“You’re not the only one who’s been strapped to this, you know.” She holds the laser above Dell’s leg, leaning over the table and slices it away. “Come to think of it, you’re getting it easy.” The laser clicks off. Petra presses another button and Dell feels her legs being drawn down the table, “I was scattered all over the room before he stopped.”

“Bet you enjoyed it, though.”

Petra smiles wistfully, “Well…”

“So, are you done turning me into Delllets?”

Petra appears to study the table, and the dismembered girl strapped to it, “I suppose.” She smiles, “I can always go mad later.”

“Too late.”

“I heard that.”

“Great.”

“Oh, well, time for the next bit, I suppose.”

“Next bit? What next bit? What else can you do to me?”

“You’ll see.”

“Oh, no. Not another ‘you’ll see’. You said that last time.” Petra presses another button. The table grinds again, but Dell can’t feel any parts of her moving. Another button, and she feels parts of the table sinking under her, leaving dozens of holes in the table. “Pincushion time.” She mutters as Petra pushes another button. Nothing happens, no movement, just a very faint warmth coming through the holes. “Hey, what is this? Trying to kill me with anticipation?”

Petra pushes the next button and the table drops sharply. Dell yells in surprise as the warmth shoves up through her, dozens of glowing light bulbs piercing through her body. Petra lifts off the glasses, staring at the lights glowing through the pinned and dismembered body on the table. “Enjoying yourself?”

“Oh, absolutely. I just loooooove being chopped up and then stuck on a bed of glowsticks. What could be better?”

“Glad you like it.” She glances at the control panel, pulling up her glasses. “Ooooh, what’s this?” she grabs a dial and twists, a faint clicking sound as it turns around. The lights inside Dell glow brighter and brighter until she’s lost in the white and red light. Petra picks up a small yellow Post It note from the floor. ‘Petra, don’t mess with the dial!!!!’ She looks at the glow, and the dial. “Whoops.” She quickly twists it back, dimming the light, but that only shows the glowing sticks, with no sign of Dell. “Double whoops.”

“What the hell have you done to me now?” Petra looks up, to see a pure white Dell floating above the lights, the wall clearly visible through her, tiny beams of light flickering up from the bulbs to Dell.

“Oopsie.”

“You didn’t mean to do this, did you?”

“Uhm, oh, well, you see...”

“And you don’t know how to put me back, do you?”

“Does it hurt?”

“Feels kinda weird. I mean, I know I’m here, but it doesn’t really feel like it. Like I’m just kinda floating, not really here at all.”

Petra reaches out, the beams streaming onto her hand. A dark band flashes through Dell’s form as Petra’s hand blocks the light. She shivers. Petra jerks her hand back.

“Sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry. Fix this.”

“Uhm, Paul!” Petra runs out of the room, shouting for help.

Dell shakes her head, closing her white eyes. “Aaaah. That’s better.” She giggles, “Weird, but definitely a good feeling. Hope she doesn’t hurry back.”



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