

PETER AND LISA: CHAPTER 57A
MARK AND CARRIE: PART 1
CARRIE AND MARK: PART 3
MARK: PART 1
STARRING STEVEN OSBOURNE
INTERVIEW WITH A MAGICIAN

Mark adjusts himself in the seat again. The headless woman forming the chair doesn't make a comment, her arms at her side, forearms out horizontal, knees bent under her, the pedestal firmly fixed beneath her, her skin a bit leathery, feeling softer than a person should. He looks across the desk. It's an impressive desk. Big, mahogany, the kind you see the big company boss behind in movies to show he's the important one. Steven sits in a larger chair, comprised of at least two headless women, one arm wrapped around each other's shoulder as the other forms the plush arm of the chair. A torso emerges like a ship's figurehead behind him, the arms and everything below mid-thigh apparently stuck in the wall. In fact, every decoration or piece of furniture, from the pictures on the wall to the standing lamp, even to the shelves, seems to have been crafted from a female form, all of them seemingly without heads or clothes. "You got all your stuff shipped over, then?"

"Looks like it, doesn't it?"

"It does. You're certainly leaning into your aesthetic, aren't you?"

"When you've got style, why not play up that fact?"

"Sure, but you didn't invite me over just to compliment you on your taste in décor."

"Are you sure?"

"Pretty sure. If you wanted something like that, you'd have booze around. Or we'd be meeting in the bar. We're meeting in your fancy office for something else."

"Fine, fine, but you're wrong about the booze." He pulls a personalised shot glass from one of the drawers of the desk, reaching for one of the breasts behind him, squeezing a decent measure out.

"But, yeah, this is for proper stuff."

"Which is?"

"You know what that bitch is planning, right?"

"Let's say I don't. Enlighten me."

"She's trying to 'protect' assistants from 'abusive' contracts."

"Hadn't heard that."

"It's early stages. She's getting her bitch friend to talk to her bitch lawyer about it, all hush hush."

"So hush hush you know all about it?"

"I've got connections, man, you know that."

Mark shrugs, "Sure. And if you're going to call every woman involved 'bitch', it's going to get hard to follow you."

"Never thought you'd be defending the bitches given what they've done to you."

"Please, Steveo, don't go off on one already. I'm just sayin' it's hard to know which bitch is which. So, what is the bitch committee plannin'?"

"I don't know exactly, but they're looking into ways to make the contracts 'fairer' and 'less exploitative'. For fuck's sake."

"Poor Steveo, havin' to treat all your playthings nicely."

"Don't you start goin' all SJW on me, man. I thought you'd understand."

Mark shrugs, "If they get it to be an actual thing? I'll give a shit then, I promise. But there's no point gettin' all worked up for somethin' that'll probably amount to exactly half of jack shit."

"I suppose."

"You know I'm right, mate. Doin' it's gonna be tricky as fuck, after all. It's not worth it until there's somethin' there. Punchin' smoke doesn't get you nowhere."

"Bitch just pisses me off. All that effort just to screw me over. Doesn't give a fuck for people like us."

"Uh-huh. You mind if I get a drink?"

"Sure, man, go ahead."

"Got a spare glass? Drinking straight ain't classy."

Steven pulls a plain shot glass from the drawer. "Have fun."

Mark squeezes out a measure. "So, what else was on your mind?"

"Huh?"

"Steveo, I know you, remember? Just callin' me to get pissy about something 'er ladyship is up to is not your style, especially not callin' me in here. So, what else?"

"I want you to work for me."

"What?"

"I want you to work for me." He smiles, "Better pay. Free use of the facilities." He squeezes a nearby breast to make the point, "No restrictions on your act. No need to hide anything. You'd be a headliner."

Mark says nothing for a few seconds, "Ok. What's your angle in this?"

"What?"

"Steveo, mate, you know I love you, but you always have an angle. Always."

"I d..."

"Yeah, you do. So what is it? I mean, you might want me to work for you, sure, I buy that, but that's not the only thing, is it?"

"When did you get so cynical?"

"A week last Thursday. So?"

"Alright, fine. It's starting payback on the queen bitch."

"Uh-huh. I can see that. So takin' me and my act away is a gotcha. Showin' you're the big man around here and can take her things from under her nose. Yeah, I can see that."

"Not just that. Might lead to a new way of doing things, a better way."

"Fine. Let's see your deal and I'll consider it."

"Do you want that bitch lording it over you or something?"

"Nah, but you can't trust anyone these days. Besides, I need to run it by my business partner."

"Business partner? That tart? Man, has she got your balls in her purse."

"Like I said, show me the money and I'll have a think about it."

"Geeze, everyone's so mercenary these days."

"You taught me well."

"Too well, apparently."

"Thanks for the booze, Steveo."

Carrie tosses her coat over the back of the chair, flopping down, "Ok, I'm here. What did you want to talk about?"

"I've been offered a job."

"A job?"

"Yeah."

"You've got a job already."

"Yeah, but this one has better pay and some fringe benefits."

"Sounds good. What's the catch?"

"Why would there be a catch?"

"Because you're being cagey, and we're having this conversation face to face. If it was straightforward, you'd tell me over the phone."

"Ok, so there might be a catch. Depends how you view things."

Carrie waits.

"It's for Steveo."

"Why's that a catch?"

"Really?"

"I mean, just because he's a fuckwit who makes my skin crawl and I have no doubt wouldn't have a

clue about personal boundaries, why should it be a problem?"

"Yeah, I figured. Steveo tends to have that effect on women like you?"

"Women like me?"

"The ones who won't take crap off anyone."

"Is that a compliment?"

"Don't let it go to your head."

"I promise. So, what's the deal?"

"Why?"

"Because if it's good enough, I can deal with a creep. And if it's not, well, then we have to have a longer talk."

"About?"

"About whether it's good enough for you to take anyway."

"Babes..."

"You want to do it. Otherwise you'd already have turned it down. And I'm not going to hold you back."

"Right. Babes, it's not like that."

"Yeah, it is, at least a little."

"No, it's not. Babes, I don't know the details of the deal yet. Steveo probably thought I'd take it on the nod, but even I'm not that much of a sucker anymore."

"So what are we talking about?"

"So I don't spring it on you out of nowhere. I figure if you think I'm trying to bounce you, suddenly I'm dealing with Tr...your sister."

"That's unfair!"

"Is it?"

"Yeah, if I thought you were trying to force me into something, there is no way I'd be that fucking nice! And if you think my sister's trouble..."

"If you say so, babes. We good?"

"We good. Let's see what the deal is."

"You want in on the first sight?"

Carrie shakes her head, "No. Just bring it here and I'll see what it looks like."

"Ok, babes."

A few days later, back in the Steven's office, "You're killing me with this mistrust, you know, man."

"Yeah, sure, like you'd have signed up like that," he snaps his fingers, "if our positions were reversed."

"Sure I would have, not that they'd have been reversed."

"So?"

"Here." He pushes the document across the table.

Mark picks it up and starts to skim through it. "Not seeing accommodation down here, Steveo."

"What am I? An estate agent?"

"Can't afford to take this at those rates in London, mate. Doubt I'd get to keep my place at E's if I'm workin' for you, after all."

"I'm not doing accommodation."

"Then it needs more dosh."

"You're trying to ruin me, man!"

"Just trying to get my share."

"Fine. I'll look into it! Happy now?"

"I'll let you know."

"Got to check your mistress approves?"

Mark shrugs and keeps reading, "She's a part of the act."

"She's the assistant! I can give you a dozen of them who aren't frigid cockteases."

Mark stops, "Don't go there, Steveo."

"I don't understand it, man. You used to get how to keep the hos in line, all 'treat 'em mean, keep 'em keen'. Now you're white knightin' for one who isn't even putting out?"

"Nah, mate, you've got it all wrong."

"Oh, really?"

"Yeah, I'm doing it to protect you. 'Cause if she heard that? You'd be wearing your balls as earrings."

"I can handle her."

"Sure you can, Steveo."

He shrugs, "Bitches are all the same. They play hard to get, acting all independent, but deep down they all need a guy to take them in hand. They all love a real man who's in charge and will put them in their place. Makes them juice right up."

"Pretty sure she's not interested in any men, remember? Even you."

"That's what they say. Just needs a decent fuckin' to cure her. I'd put those titties to good use."

"Sure thing, Steveo." He folds up the contract. "I'll be back with this and we can talk rates properly."

"Sure. Bring your mistress so I can talk to the organ grinder and save time."

"Sure, sure, Steveo."

A few days later, back in the office, "Here you go, Steveo. Changes are in the margins."

"Changes?"

Mark shrugs, "We have some minor details we need clarification on."

"We? I don't see a 'we' here. She's got you as her errand boy?"

"If it makes you feel better. Maybe she just doesn't feel she can control herself around you."

"Fine, let's have a look at these 'changes'." he takes the contract back, reading through as Mark leans back in the chair. "That's a lot of changes. Not sure some of them mesh with the way I work here."

"Oh?"

"Can't believe you give a shit about the assistant's conditions."

"It was a surprise to me, too, mate, but it is what it is."

"Yeah, figured you'd say something like that. Which is why I've arranged an interview."

"Interview?"

"For an assistant who won't disrupt things."

"You're really not getting' this, are you, Steveo?"

"Come on, man, just meet her. For me?"

"And then you'll drop it?"

"Sure, sure, just meet her, try her out, and if it doesn't work out, you can crawl back to your boss."

"Fine, Steveo, as a mate..."

Later, Mark sits in a small room at the backstage, the walls cluttered with props, "Sure, you get the fancy office with the totty on standby, Steveo, I get a broom cupboard."

There's a knock on the door. Mark does his best to get himself presentable.

"Come in."

A slim redhead bounces in, a cheery smile on her face, a light dusting of freckles across her nose and cheeks. A loose white sleeveless top hangs from her pale shoulders, a black skirt swirling around her thighs as her bare feet pad on the floor.

"You're the one he's set up, right?"

"Yes, Master." she bobs down, "Anne, at your service."

Mark looks her up and down. "Wearing clothes? Is Steveo slipping?"

She giggles, "No, Master. Just wanted to look professional. I can take them off if you prefer?"

"Maybe later. You look a little familiar, don't I know you?"

A slightly lopsided grin curls Anne's face, "Oh, yes, Master, you know me. You've known me very well indeed. Well, one bit of me and you have gotten very well acquainted, at least."

"Huh?"

Anne undoes the skirt, letting it slide down to reveal her naked hips, a tuft of ginger hair at the top of her sex. "Remember me now? You got to know my pussy a lot on opening night. Biblically, especially."

"Oh, right, you're the one who got in that Matt's contraption."

Anne nods, "And then you took my cute little pussy and spent all night using it and using it and..." she bites her lip.

"Right. Well, the thing is, I'm not looking for an assistant, I've already got one."

"Oh." Anne's face falls, "So what am I being interviewed for if there's no job?"

"Steveo insisted. No idea why you got the short straw, but he's pulling out all the stops to get me to sign on the dotted line. And you're the last stop to pull."

"Oh, I see."

"Yeah. Bit of a waste of both our times. So what do you want to do? Keep talking? Take it seriously so Steveo doesn't get mad? Call it off?"

"Oh, I, we should probably at least take it seriously for a bit."

"Sure."

"I know why, by the way."

"You know why what?"

"I know why I got the straw."

"Oh?"

"Because I wanted it."

"Wanted it?"

"The job. Being an assistant. Being your assistant. Being your...never mind."

"Being my what?"

"Never mind." she repeats, looking away, blushing fiercely.

"Nah, you've got my attention now."

"Yes, Master. I, look, if I say it, you'll think I'm a magic slut or something, and I'm not, but..."

"But?"

"But, I want this, you know. To be manipulated, to be...helpless before someone who can do impossible things to me and then...do whatever he likes with me. And this is my chance and...look, ask Carrie, she'll tell you I'm good. So maybe you need a second assistant, all magicians need a second assistant, right, or maybe you need someone to practice on, or...or..."

"Or?"

"Doesn't matter."

"If you're going to be my assistant, you need to do better at communicating."

"But I'm not going to be your assistant, am I? You've already got Carrie."

"That's fair, I guess."

"So, can you do some magic to me? Please? To make this not entirely pointless and embarrassing?"

"I didn't bring the collar..." he looks at the crestfallen expression she immediately covers, "sure, I can do something." Anne beams at him, "Now, I'm sure I saw something around here..." he pulls away some of the boxes, bringing out a neck stock and a square blade.

Anne presents her neck to him, pulling her hair out of the way.

"Well, you know what you're doing."

"Uh-huh. I do a mean decapitated blow-job, too."

Mark fastens the stock around her neck. She reaches up to hold it in place as he aligns the blade.

"Fast or slow?"

"Ooooh, slow. It's more fun when it lasts."

Mark inches the blade into the slot in the stocks. Anne coos and wriggles as the blade makes its way through her neck.

"Mmmmmmmmm."

Mark unlocks the latches and lifts the top of the stocks, and Anne's head, away from her body.

"Oh, that's nice. Let me see me."

Mark turns her towards her body. Her body gives a twirl, the skirt rising a little.

"I always love this, my body looks so cute from this angle."

"Yeah, I'd definitely go with that. Now, I believe someone mentioned blow job?"

Anne smiles, "At least buy me dinner first."

"Right." he looks down at her, "Want me to put you back?"

"Don't you dare. I'll get it done later." she holds out her hand for her head and strolls out the door.

Later, "...and that's when she walked out. I'm confused, babes."

Carrie gives him a pitying look, "No, you're an idiot."

"What? What did I do?"

She rolls her eyes, and pulls out her phone, "Call her. Ask her out. Have fun." she hands him a scrawled number.

"What?"

"Anne. Call her. Ask her out. The fun should follow, especially if you bring the collar. She'll want to play as you're not a complete loser. Just don't take her to Steven's, it's her workplace after all. It'll be weird. And tell her this counts as cashing in that favour I owe her."