

HAYULP!!
THE PERILS OF ANNELOPE PITSTOP
by pwatson1974
A Faustus story

Anne's eyes flutter awake. She feels something digging into her back and shifts, only to find her arms and legs unable to move. She tugs, feeling something restricting her wrists, waist and ankles. "Man, ah must've had a damn fine time last night." she twists her head as her eyes open further, sneezing at the sawdust filling the air. "Ah, Miss Pitstop, you're awake." the thin, nasally voice whines from the shadows.

"Pitstop? What are ya..." she looks down her body, clad in a bright red racing jacket, leading to a microskirt and leggings, an outfit that she not only doesn't own but went out of style decades before she was even born. Her white heeled boots are tied with rough ropes around her ankles. The ropes loop around a rough tree trunk thicker around than she is. At the end of the log a giant buzzsaw stands silently, looming over the log, everything around her looking like an archaic sawmill, the air filled with sawdust, "...oh, wonderful."

"Exactly, my dear. Wonderful for me, at least." She turns her head, focusing on the voice. A pair of thick pince-nez peer out over a long pointed nose, a bandicoot mask wrapped behind them under a wide-brimmed green hat. A dark green poncho-cloak drapes over his shoulders, thin fingers twisting around each other as he wrings his hands in glee. "For you, things might be taking a decidedly sharp turn."

"You're the, what was it, on that old cartoon, the Hooded...Paw?"

"Claw! The Hooded Claw! It's the Hooded Claw!"

"Yeah, yeah, sure."

"You've sneered your last sneer, Pitstop!" he pulls on a large lever on the floor, like a set of train points, and the buzzsaw begins to turn rapidly picking up speed until it's a thundering blur at the end of the log.

"Is that all? Ah've seen bigger an' better."

"Mock me, will you?" he reaches for a second lever.

"Oh, no!" she exclaims dramatically, her hands twitching as she tries to place the back of them over her forehead. Her head leans back, feeling a pony tail under her neck, a racer's helmet clenching over the rest of her hair. "Whatevah shall become of li'l ol' me?"

At which point a white van screeches through a 180 degree turn. Its doors fly open and seven pint sized figures spill out in sharp double-breasted suits in a rainbow of individual colours. Each wears a trilby hat the same colour as their suit and sports a patch of five o'clock shadow around the mouth.

"Ok, youse mugs, we're here." Faustus barks in his grey suit, a derby half his height on his head,

"Get Annelope out of there."

"Sure thing, boss boss" Petra salutes, a little taller than the others, even with Faustus' hat adding inches, rushing towards the log.

"Yep yep yeppies." Zilvy agrees, her legs pinwheeling wildly as her diminutive purple form scampers across the floor after her sister, and crashing together, tripping and falling, purple and sky blue limbs scattering across the floor.

"Annelope? Oh, gawd, kill me now."

"As you wish, my dear." the Claw pushes on the second lever and with a jolt, the log moves, the buzzsaw biting into the wood, sawdust spraying everywhere.

"That was rhetorical, ya..." she looks down, her legs getting closer and closer to the whirling blade, "...uhm, ah don't wanna complain about the rescue an' all, despite bein' so naturally self-reliant, but, hayyyulp!!"

"I'll save you, Annelope!" an orange-suited Dell leaps from the cab of the van, pulling, and scattering behind her, an array of items from her suit pockets that have no right being there, including bowling balls, cards, dolls, nunchucks, a tiger that lets out a roar before she shoves it back

in, and finally a large sword swinging around frantically.

"No, we'll save you, Annelope." Sam shoves her way forward, Marcel loping behind her, in matching white suits. Dell shoves her back, and the two of them turn on each other, rolling around the floor in a cloud of biting, scratching, spitting, kicking dust as Marcel tries to reach in to stop things, emerging with his sleeve ripped off and scratches covering his arm.

"Wayall, that's true ta life, at least." the log shudders as the saw tears through the ropes over her ankles, "On more urgent matters, hayulp!!" she lifts her legs, pulling them out of the way as sawdust spatters her leggings.

The Claw laughs as the sawblade gets closer and closer to her.

"Where's that nail file? Doesn't that girl always have a nail file to get outta scrapes like this?"

"Looking for this, Pitstop?" he sneers, holding up the nail file.

"Wayall, that's just damn unsporting." she glances down as the sawblade inches closer.

"Such a sha...urk!" a green arm wraps around his neck, jerking him back. The nail file bounces on the floor. A flailing shiny black shoe kicks into the lever, setting it to double speed. Anne lurches forward, the blade tearing into her hips.

"Uhm, oops?" Jackie mutters as she tries to hold the struggling Claw, hanging from his collar,

"Could someone stop tha'? Bit busy here wi' this bampot. Speakin' of, quit squirmin' will ye?" she jerks her arm back harder, thumping her fist on his head.

"No, no, it's fine, take yore time, ah'm not goin' nowhere!" Anne gripes through gritted teeth as her belt and the ropes around her waist tear apart under the spinning blade.

The pile of purple and blue parts starts to twitch and move, hands pulling assorted pieces together. The cloud of dust continues its chaotic progress across the floor with Marcel chasing helplessly after trying, to little if any avail, to calm things down. Jackie continues to chastise the Hooded Claw. The saw continues its progress through Anne's stomach and up into her ribs, juddering through the bones.

"No, don't strain yoreselves, no hurry! Ah'm fine, everythin's fine, absolutely fine!"

The saw continues its inexorable path into Anne's neck.

"We'll save you, Annelope!" a purple and blue figure resembling a spider made of mismatched human parts scuttles forwards, twin heads on its shoulders.

"Hurry urrrggghh!" the saw tears into her mouth, cutting up into her face.

"Such a shame. So sad. A lovely person." The Hooded Claw wipes a tear away from his mask.

"Tha's enough outta ye." and gets another punch in the head for his trouble.

The saw tears through her racing helmet and continues on, severing the ropes around the wrists of her flared red driver's gloves. Her arms flop to the sides of the log as the two halves split apart, the saw completing it's grisly work. Everything goes still. Even the chaos between Dell and Sam stops, Marcel's hand on each shouler, their suits scuffed and torn.

"Will y'all quit starin' like damned guppies an' get me back together?!!!"

Faustus claps his hands, "Alright, youse mugs, youse hoid da lady. Hop to it! Jaks, hold on tight. He's a slippery one. Petra, Zilvy, Zilva, whatever, you get the logs. Sam, Marcel, you keep her still. Dell, get any duct tape in your pocketses?"

"No fair! I won!!! I got Annelope Pitstowwww!" Jackie hits him again as the others blur into a ranbow of activity that results in Anne gingerly stepping off the log, wrapped from her head to her hips in thick grey tape, her eyes peeking out through a gap like a cartoon mummy.

"Really?" she mumbles, "This is the best y'all got?"

"Of course not. Dell, scissors." a pair of giant child's safety scissors appear in his hands, the blunted blades the size of garden shears. "Thank you." he slides the scissors under the tape.

"Ooooh, cold!"

Faustus shrugs, snipping upwards until Anne shakes the tape free.

"An' now, ah think ah'd like a word with the Hooded Gourd."

"Claw! It's the Hooded owwww!!! Will you quit doing that?!"

"Nah, ah know who ya are, tinhorn, an' ah warned ya what would happen next time ya ruined mah dreams, but we should be doin' this proper, an' ah always preferred Scooby Doo, so let's see who

you really are under that mask.” she pulls the Claw's hat, mask and face away in one movement, revealing a grinning pumpkin face.

“Jack O'Lantern?!!!” everyone gasps, “You were the Hooded Claw all along?!”

“And I would have gotten away with it if wasn't for you meddling kids!!” he sneers, disappearing from Jackie's grip in a cloud of pungent smoke.