

## PETER AND LISA: CHAPTER 86

### PRODUCT TESTING

Tabitha sits on a side chair, her legs crossed unconsciously, her raised foot tapping gently on the air, "So, let me get this straight. What we're talking about is an app that is linked to a person. The base version, is that going to cost, by the way? That just records a log of what happens magically to the linked person."

"Not quite."

"It's never simple with you, is it?" Lisa asks, her eye roll audible from across the room.

"The app can also record a magical change and store it. That can then be accessed from the app. But that just..."

"No buts just yet. So, the app can also record a trick and store it for later use."

"Yes."

Tabitha sucks her teeth. "Ok. And what happens to that stored trick? Who owns it?"

"The assistant. The app is theirs."

"Can see magicians getting a bit het up about that. All their secrets downloaded and in the control of their assistant."

"The record has to be turned on, so that would be something they'd need to discuss. And most magicians don't have really unique tricks magically speaking. The difference between any two sawing in half tricks is basically nil."

"Noted. But I still expect a fight on that one. Now, the but."

"Assistants already 'learn' the tricks. It just takes a while and a lot of repetition."

"So this is speed-running an existing process. That makes me feel a bit better on the safety front. So, that's the basics."

"Yes."

Tabitha puts a line across the page of her notebook. "So, onto the other side of this. The basic app can also download tricks that can then be applied to the assistant through it."

"Yes."

"And they can upload a trick they've recorded to SAT's repository. Who owns it then?"

"We haven't worked that out yet."

"Well, before I'm letting it near a guild approval, get that sorted."

"No problem."

"Ok. And the various settings?"

"That's more of a Carrie thing."

"So, you can't say, download a fucktoy app and turn her into a sex-addled bimbo?"

"Well..."

"Not a good start, Magic Boy."

"It would go to the assistant's app."

"And 'the community' has some people who are as horny as a rabbit after no nut November and with the common sense of a ham sandwich. So they'd let it happen."

"Yup."

"But...they'd have let it happen, so we can advise against but...fine. I still want security on it."

"I'll talk to SAT."

"You do that. Another thought: The app is recording what happens magically to someone, yes?"

"Yes."

"So, could it be used as a map to reverse something done magically to them?"

Peter pauses. "Theoretically. Maybe. I hadn't thought about that."

"Think about it. If it's a failsafe against something going wrong, well, that's something I can recommend."

"It would have made restoring Carrie from being a cup of coffee a lot easier."

"Depends on the security. A cup of coffee isn't going to pass a biometric check based on Carrie."

"Is there magic ID checks?"

"I suppose there could be, but we'd need to figure out how that works."

"So..."

"I know, I know, I'll ask SAT."

"You've got him very well trained."

"Woof."

Several weeks later, they meet up again, "So good news. SAT have managed to get something that works. It's gated by the aura of the person scanned. And it could probably work as a restore path, but they haven't added that."

"Why..." Tabitha starts.

"Because using the app means using the assistant to power the changes. If they stop, the change stops. So restore path would only be useful for changes outside the app and that's not their responsibility."

"That's disappointing."

"It sounds like it will be difficult and expensive to get it to work. So they don't want to commit to something that will cost money."

Tabitha takes a deep sigh, "Typical corporate. Fine. We can live without that, I guess."

"There is something else."

"Oh, is there? Let's hear it." she folds her arms in preparation.

"There is an option for remote access."

"Uhhhhhh-huh. Which undermines pretty much all the security I want put in."

"SAT says that as it's powered by the assistant, they can stop whatever's sent because it's drawing on their power. They're also putting in limits on what mental changes can be implemented as part of the app. So anything that goes too far won't be accessible on the system."

"Which means what?"

"That it won't be available on their site so you can't just download it."

"I'm not happy about this."

"They're going ahead with it regardless, so if the UKAG can't endorse, they're ok with that."

"The remote access is downloaded?"

"So they said."

"So it's something you have to opt into yourself. The magician can't just download the remote access and get control."

"Correct."

"Fine."

"There is one more thing..."

"Of course there is." Lisa says, rolling her eyes.

"They've been mostly testing on Carrie, so..."

"So they want me to be a guinea pig. Again."

"Yes? Also, we're trying the process by someone who isn't SAT to make sure it works normally."

"Fine. Tab, do you want to stay for this?"

"I'll act as a witness to the shenanigans, sure."

"Shenanigans? Us?"

"I said what I said."

"So first you need to create an account..."

Several steps later, "Ok, I think I'm ready." she stares at the screen, "Here goes nothing." she presses the large 'initialise' button. The phone camera activates, a progress bar marked scanning slowly filling up. "Do you wish to finalise connection?" I guess." she presses the screen.

"Preparing to finalise. Please place phone on stable surface.' Why do I need to..." She goes silent as her body dissolves into a cloud of coloured pixels streaming into the screen. The phone drops onto the sofa. Tabitha looks at over at it. She turns to Peter.

"You are so dead. If you start now, you might escape the blast radius when she comes back."

"What makes you think I knew about..."

"Because this is exactly the sort of thing you'd do."

"So you're saying I shouldn't pretend the user agreement has a clause signing over the user to my ownership?"

"If you're not that attached to keeping all your body parts, sure, go for it. Is what just happened necessary?"

"So SAT said."

"And how long does it take?" she looks over at the progress bar, "10%?" she arches her eyebrow,

"There'd better be some wine waiting for her when she gets out. The good stuff, too."

Five minutes later, the phone dings, the screen flashes 'Integration complete' and Lisa pours out as colourfully as she poured in, although possibly a little less gracefully. She blinks, looks at her phone, looks at Peter and finally looks at the bottle of wine waiting for her on the small table. "Fine, Magic Boy. You may live." she takes the bottle and picks up the phone. "So, what..." she whistles, "...that is detailed information." She turns slightly redder, "Very detailed."

Tabitha leans over her shoulder and whistles. "Measurements only your gynaecologist should have."

Lisa scrambles to cover the screen. Tabitha backs off well out of arm's length, very deliberately not smiling. Lisa drains the glass quickly. "So, as I said, what now?"

"We should probably do something small, safe so we can check it records and that we can play it back."

"You don't do small and safe, Magic Boy."

"He's getting better. He hasn't told you about the Ts & Cs yet."

Lisa swivels a glare on Peter as he pulls his betrayed look off Tabitha who smirks as she salutes him with a raise of the glass. "Explain."

"A silly joke that I was smart enough not to tell you."

"Explain more."

"It was that there was a clause in the end user agreement that meant you became my prop..."

"I see." she purrs dangerously, fur spreading across her skin. She curls her fingers, flexing out her claws, her fangs lengthening in her feline face.

"I didn't say it!"

"Which is why you're still able to breathe. And don't think I didn't notice you're the one stirring shit."

Tabitha shrugs her shoulders, "I have to get my entertainment somewhere."

"I am not everyone's free entertainment!"

"You say that..."

"You're supposed to be on my side!"

"I am. Doesn't mean I can't have some fun with it."

"Well, I suppose we should look at the log."

"Why?"

"He probably means the fur. And the tail."

Lisa looks down. "I did that?"

"Apparently. Does the kitty cutie want scritchies?"

"No." she growls, "Does Tabitha want scratchies?"

"You say that, but the ears say different."

Lisa picks up phone to avoid any more comments and opens the app. "There's a new option there. It's gobbledygook, though." she presses her finger on it, "There. Rename."

"Can you open it up?"

She presses another option and shows him a screen of coloured code. "There. But I'm not sharing this one."

"Ok. Shall we try downloading from the repository?"

"Sure. But I pick what. God knows what perverted things they've 'encoded' from Carrie."