

MAGICIAN AND HIS TOYS: PART 9
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO AUNTIE JANE

by Paul Watson
for 2good2btru

Glinda jabs a finger at his chest as the magician stands in his doorway, the morning light too bright and far, far too early. "What have you done with Aunt Jane, Mal?!" she demands. He takes a step back. She steps up, jabbing again. "And don't try to play innocent with me. No one's told me where she is. I've barely had eye-contact once I asked, but Lianna told me I had to talk to you about where she was. So, where is she?"

The Magician straightens himself up, "Glinda. It's been a while."

"It's been eight years, Mal. I've been on an extended extended world tour with the show. But you know that. You were there when she sent us all away. Now stop deflecting."

"I don't know where she is. Not exactly."

"What the unholy fuck does that mean?"

"Do you really want to continue this in the doorway?"

Glinda looks up and down the nearly empty street, and ungraciously steps inside. "Now, where is..."

"I don't know."

"You don't...what the fuck did you do to her?"

"Why do you keep blaming me?!"

She folds her arms, "Why shouldn't I?"

"Well, if you'll stop accusing me of things for five fu..." he self-censors, "...minutes I'll try to tell you what I do know. Ok?" Glinda stands sullenly, "Ok?"

"Whatever. You got anything to drink in this dump?"

"It's..." he looks down at his watch, "...god, who even made up this time? It's eight o'clock."

"So? I've only just got back. I'm still on Hong Kong time. And if I'm going to have to listen to you talk, I need a drink."

"Charming."

"Clock's ticking."

"Ok. So, you know why your aunt had you run the tour, right?"

"Something about owing you."

"Well, that's true enough. When I became her apprentice..."

"Second apprentice."

"Fine, whatever. Anyway, as I wasn't her favoured niece, that meant becoming hers during the process."

"Her what?"

"Just...hers. You seriously didn't know all the others belonged to Jane? What have you been doing for the last eight years?!"

"Hey, we're not talking about me."

"Fine, fine. So, anyway, when I became her apprentice..."

"Second apprentice."

"...there was an...escape clause."

"Uh-huh."

"Once she'd turned me into Mal, we agreed that if I turned the tables on her and got her to turn me back, we'd trade places and she'd belong to me."

"So where is she?"

"Ah-ah. Wait. Now, the original agreement didn't give a duration."

"It didn't what?"

"Probably because I doubt she thought it would ever happen. But when it did, we...renegotiated the agreement."

"Uh-huh."

"So Jane became mine for the same period I'd been hers. About five years."

"It's been eight. Where's she been for the last three years?"

"I'm coming to that."

"Before you do that, what's with all the 'belonging' stuff?"

The Magician sighs heavily, "What do you think it means?"

"It sounds like...like how you talk about your car or your computer or, you know, stuff."

"Pretty much."

Glinda's eyes widen significantly. "You're saying you owned her?"

"Pretty much. Same way she owned me, or the other girls. I never got a look at your contract, for obvious reasons, but I wouldn't put it past her to..."

"How dare you?!"

"How dare I what?"

"You're saying my aunt was some kind of...of slaveholder!"

"And? She was. Some kind of, anyway."

"What does *that* mean?"

"It means Jane owned people. Me. The other girls. You, I don't know about. Family might have been a bridge too far for her. Who knows?"

"But she..."

"Treated us well? Yeah, I'll give her that. Up to a point. The fuck parties..."

"Oh, come on, they were fun."

He laughs.

"What?" Glinda replies, getting more offended and angry at each piece of information.

"The SSC ones were, sure. The ones she let you come along to. The other ones were a lot more..."

he gestures, searching for the words, "...SINEC, I guess."

"What?"

"Safish, Insane, Not Entirely Consensual. She certainly didn't let me say no to being the primary fucktoy in residence. Maybe that was just a perk of being her apprentice."

"Second apprentice." she replies almost on instinct.

"Anyway, that's what I mean by belonged. And if you want to check the contracts of the girls, or even ask them, you'll find the same thing."

"I'll do just that!"

"Ok. So, back to Jane. After I got free, she refused to transfer the rest of the girls, or especially you, to my control."

"She refused? I thought she was your toy."

"I'm not a monster. Besides, just because you *can* force a toy to obey, doesn't make it the best option. Better to have a semi-willing, cooperative toy than one bent on being a pain in the arse overflowing with malicious compliance. So, she sent you away. Whether it was to keep you away from me, or to prevent you finding out about her, or a bit of both, who the fuck knows?"

"Which is why she made sure the tour was so long. And always getting extended."

"Well, part of that was me. After I lost her, I called in..."

"Wait, what?! 'After you lost her'?! Lost?! What the fuck does that mean?"

"I was getting to that."

"Get there faster!"

"Ok. I'll skim over the five years of having a very creative, hot and horny woman who was at my beck and call for any..."

"Ewwwwwww!! Gross."

He smiles to himself, "Anyway, during that time, she continued teaching me. Just I had her to practice on rather than...the previous arrangement. And when we found a teaching magic to impart all her magical knowledge into me..."

"Don't those just transfer knowledge, not..."

"It would have been very helpful to know that at the time."

"You didn't know? How?! Aunt Jane warned me off from those for exactly that reason!"

"Well, for whatever reason, she didn't warn me off."

"Right. Sure. Or you ignored her." she replies sceptically, "So, after you lobotomised her, what happened?"

"I didn't..."

"Don't care. Move on. Before I decide punching your stupid face is worth more to me than finding out what happened to her."

"So, when we were getting towards the end of her 'apprenticeship'..."

"Second..."

"Not this time. Anyway, I threw a party to celebrate her impending freedom."

"That sounds suspiciously nice."

"I'm a sweetheart."

"Uh-huh. What was the catch?"

"What do you..."

"Urge to punch face...rising."

"Ok, ok. So, Jane was working at the event."

"Working?"

"Well, her legs were walking around with a tray on to serve drinks. And ready to serve in any other way the guests wanted."

"I heard that."

"Her torso was an active wet bar. Drinks were free. It only cost if you wanted to drink straight from the tap. Still made a mint."

"You're sick."

"Anyway, I may have got a little high on my own supply, so to speak. Because, for the life of me, I cannot remember what I did with her after the party."

"You...can't remember?"

"Not really? I know she was there, so no worries about selling her off or having her stolen. But after that it gets...fuzzy."

"So, you're a leech, a slaver, a thief *and* a drunk, as well as being an arsehole. No wonder you're still single."

"Hey. You try staying sober on titty triple shots. Those things are potent."

"So what you're saying is, you don't know where she is?! You couldn't have led with that?"

"If you remember, I did say exactly that. Someone just wouldn't take that for an answer."

"Did you even look for her?!"

"Of course I looked for her! I even know where she is! Roughly."

"I thought you said she was lost?"

"I did. She is. I just know where she's lost."

"One minute to explain. Then I get very fucking punchy."

"Come with me." he leads her into a smaller room where a large, somewhat battered and scuffed black leather steamer trunk sits against the wall. "There she is."

"In the trunk? Why don't you just summon her out?"

"Wow. What an insight. Why didn't I think of that?" he replies, words dripping with sarcasm, "She's in there but the trunk doesn't register her as Jane so it won't produce her on command."

"Why not?"

He shrugs. "I don't know. The most likely explanation is I played with her while drunk and forgot to switch her back."

"Let me look."

"Sure." he unlocks the brass lock, unlatches the straps and opens the lid into velvety darkness, "In you go."

"You want me to go in there?"

"How else are you going to look? The only way into the contents of the trunk is into the trunk. You know that."

"I am not getting in there when you'd just lock it shut on me."

“Sadly, that would only buy me temporary peace. I still need to get into it for my own gear and you're too good to keep inside with it open.”

“And if I wasn't too good?”

“Oh, you'd be straight inside until you learned some manners. Twenty to thirty years should be long enough.”

“So get the stuff out.”

He boggles at her. “Do you have any idea how much junk is stored in there?!! Jane used it before I did and I'm pretty sure someone used it before...”

Glinda clenches her fist around her thick rings. “Minute's up. Open the trunk or I open a can of whupass.”

“You are being very unreasonable. I had hoped several years being the grown up in the room would mellow you a bit.” Glinda pulls back a fist, the rings glowing, “Ok, ok. Let me clear some space first.”

Glinda looks around the room, swings her glowing hand out and the furniture tumbles up against the wall, rugs piling on top of couches on top of easy chairs. “Space is cleared. Get on with it.”

Malcolm pulls the trunk away from the wall and tips it over, standing behind it for reasons that become obvious as the contents of the trunk fall out and keep falling out: magical cabinets of all shape and sizes; an aviary-sized birdcage complete with a flock of doves; several rabbits; an entire casino's worth of playing cards; show posters; three full length mirrors; seven closets full of clothes, only one his; a jukebox and associated record collection; enough romance novels to found a library; two guillotines, one with an extensive crack along one arm; obsolete computers and phones from half a dozen manufacturers; a mattress or two; swords, both practical and ludicrously over the top; an impressive pornography collection, including a variety of toys for the discerning gentlemen or lady; and two very special Toys, one blonde, one brunette. But, apparently, no Jane.

“Hello, Own...” they start together.

“Hey, who's this?”

“Is our Owner collecting new toys?”

“Aren't we good enough?”

Glinda turns towards him, her eyes practically ablaze, “What! The! Fuck?!”