

Profoundly POWERLESS

A Novel by Jenny Amara

Profoundly Powerless Chapter 04 - Mundane Drudgery

"I don't want to have a baby!" Paul shouted, recalling the last thing he had heard as he came to.

"Whoa, dude. You're not having a baby. You ***can*** have a baby. As in, your body is capable of it. So chill, all right?" Doctor Daybreak laid out his response in a chill surfer's vibe manner.

"Ooooooh! Can you imagine how cute she would look? Waddling around all big and pregnant," Kyrie said, squeezing her hands together, causing her body to vibrate from the excitement she was experiencing. She leaned close to Paul and continued, "Do you think you might change your mind about that?" Kyrie's expression was a mix of excitement, desire, and dread at what Paul might respond.

"What? No! I'm a guy. We just covered this Doctor..."

"Don't say that!!!"

"Uh, right. Kyrie. I'm not even seeing anyone. I have no plans to start a family, and even if I did, I don't see myself as the person doing that part. So, thanks, but no thanks.

"Aww..." Kyrie looked dejected for a moment, but only for a moment. She carried on with her exorbitant energy and enthusiasm, "Maybe... she'll change her mind." Kyrie drew out her words like a scientist exploring a possible solution, hypothesizing on a path forward.

"So, what now? You got that goop out of me; I didn't change back, obviously. Do I just go home and go about my life?"

I can't believe they sent me home. They didn't even give me any post-visit paperwork. Where's my 'So you suddenly changed genders' medical advisory papers telling me everything I need to know? Hrmph, so much for bedside manner. Paul thought to himself as he approached his apartment door. He saw that something was sticking to the door as he drew nearer.

"What's this?" Paul asked aloud as he peeled a sticky note off his door.

"Hey, dummy, you weren't here. You were supposed to meet us for dinner. Mom says, 'Hi,' and P.S., you are still a dummy. Call us to let us know you are not 100% dead. Or whatever passes for familial acknowledgment these days. Love ya, Annie."

Shit, I missed dinner night. That will take a while to live down. What do I even tell Annie? Hey, your little bro was injected with some weird substance, and it turned me into a woman in about 3 minutes flat. Oh, but don't worry, it turns out my superpower works. I'm on my way to restoring my body to its usual male self... It's just taking an age.

Paul entered his apartment and dropped his keys and wallet on the counter. Paul's apartment was neat but sparsely populated. He had a couch, a coffee table, and an entertainment stand with a television. Each of his possessions was relatively new and minimally used. Paul spent most of his time working single or double shifts to make ends meet. He had such high hopes as he reached his eighteenth birthday: he would get tested at S.U.C.K.S. and hopefully qualify as a street-level crime superhero, which provided a lucrative salary from the city government for preventing crimes like robberies and other minor offenses.

Unfortunately for Paul, he got rated as possessing the worst superpower of all superpowered users. Now, that power was being used, but so ineffectively that Paul doubted, for a moment, whether he should even bother trying. Stopping off in his tiny bathroom, he stood staring at his reflection. He could see a few more whiskers had come in, and he now looked odd for having them on his very feminine face. *I guess I'll shave?* Paul thought as he ran his hand along his face and felt the smoothness of his skin. *That's different... I guess women do have softer skin. I never thought that I'd experience that from both sides. Speaking of experiences from the other side... I should be good to get a better look at my body now that I'm safely at home.* Paul started to remove his clothes, and he immediately felt uneasy. His legs were smooth and shapely as his slacks lowered past his boxers. He was turning himself on by seeing his feminine body. He quickly pulled his pants back up. *Nope... I'm not doing it if I can't be mature about it.*

Paul exited the bathroom and plopped on his couch to watch television before heading to bed. The reckless motion caused him discomfort as he felt the weight on his chest swing and bounce wildly as he landed. *Ouch, I guess I know why I've never seen a woman do that now.* Paul said, holding his chest. The unfamiliar touch again sent his brain signals he was uncomfortable with, and he rapidly stuck his hands down at his sides.

TV, that will calm my nerves. Let's see what's on. Paul pressed the power button on his remote, and the set came on and tuned to a local news broadcast.

"In other news, local citizens ask for your help finding an elderly woman tonight. She went missing during today's Omega-level villainy event, and several concerned individuals have come forward. Hi, you're on WNMT. Tell us what you saw."

"Well, Wendy, you won't believe it. We were all filing down into an evacuation room, and I saw this nice elderly woman towards the end of the line. I figured she didn't want to be rushed down the stairs, so she waited towards the back. But then, I didn't see her when we got down there. She was missing, and this woman who worked at the cafe had been pushed down the stairs to top it all off."

"That is some story, ma'am. What do you think happened to the elderly woman, and why was the employee assaulted?"

"I think it was Mr. Irrelevant. He snapped."

"Mr. Irrelevant? You're referring to the superpowered user with the lowest power rating from the Kimper Society?"

"Yeah, he worked at the cafe, too!"

"This is a serious allegation. What evidence do you have?"

"Well, Wendy, may I call you Wendy?"

"Yes, of course, ma'am. Wendy Wildwest at your beck and call."

"Oooh, Harriet, she said it. She said her slogan."

"Ma'am, if you'd tell us what you saw?"

"Right, so Harriet and I went down earlier and recognized Mr. Irrelevant. He acknowledged it, too. He was willing to answer our questions, or so he said, once

we got down to the shelter. Anyways, when we were down in the shelter, we went on a search, and he was not there. We checked every nook and cranny. We're good searchers, too. We don't miss a thing. Even when we got back upstairs, he was nowhere to be found. So, if you ask me, he pushed his coworker down and absconded with the old lady for nefarious reasons. Maybe he recognized her and knew she had money, so he decided to take advantage of the situation and do her in. I don't know; I'm not a villain. You'd have to ask him what he did with that nice old lady."

"Well, folks, you heard it here first on WNMT; if you see or know anything about either of these individuals, be sure to contact the local crime tipline immediately. I'm Wendy Wildwest, at your beck and call."

Paul saw the picture of himself and the old lady from earlier in the day appear on the screen.

Well, shit. What am I going to do about this now? S.U.C.K.S. already got my report. So they know I didn't push someone down the stairs or abduct an old woman. That doesn't help in the court of public opinion, in any case. Do I lay low? Do I turn myself in?

Paul's phone rang with the caller identification showing 'Annie Mansson.'

"Hey, sis, I don't suppose you're calling for fun, are you?"

"You idiot. Of course not. My dummy brother is on the local news as a suspect for assaulting a woman and abducting an old lady. So, no, I'm not calling for fun. Baka!"

"Yeah, figured not. Look, there's a perfectly good explanation for what happened. I didn't want to have to do this, but you should come over. It will be clear once you do."

"Clear because I'll see an old woman hanging out with you in your tiny apartment? Is this why you missed our dinner night?"

"Umm, yes... Wait, no. There's no one else here. I didn't abduct anyone. Please don't ask me two questions without pausing. It gets confusing. Come over; I'll explain why you shouldn't be worried about me and why I missed our dinner night with Mom. I promise. I didn't do anything wrong, okay?"

"Uh-huh, well... I guess you are technically family. No one else will believe you now that you've been labeled a villain to society."

"They labeled me as a villain? Seriously? When?"

"One question at a time, right? No, not seriously. That takes an official decree. The media is ready to throw you to the wolves, however. By showing your picture, they're clearly violating the Kimper Society's secret identity provisions. So, you know, you're screwed."

"Ugh, don't you think I know that?"

"Well, it feels good to remind my dummy brother."

"Right... Please don't be late, I still have work in the morning. I work at a cafe; they open at dawn, which isn't too long from now..."

Paul hung up the phone and returned his attention to his current state. *All right, Paul, you need to get yourself prepared. It's your sister, she will understand... Who am I kidding? She will probably laugh. No, she will definitely laugh. I still resemble my male self. She will see me, connect the dots, and then laugh.*

I wish I had something I could wear besides this. I feel so ridiculous in these oversized clothes. Paul felt a strange swirling of energy at his thought, but it quickly passed. Scanning his room, he almost thought he saw a slight flicker of light by his bed. Paul assumed it was fatigue from his day and carried on.

Even if I had different clothes, would they be women's clothes? I could easily throw on another men's-cut shirt. I'd still look and feel ridiculous in it. Annie will be here in a half hour. Come on, Paul, decide! Change your clothes and risk being weirded out or continue to be uncomfortable in these clothes.

Paul steeled himself and decided he was going to have to change out of his work clothes. He grabbed a T-shirt that was on the smaller side and a pair of shorts. *Leave the boxers on, swap out pants for shorts, and don't look when you take your shirt off.* So, Paul did exactly that. He rushed through and fought every urge his male brain wanted to highlight while his female body rang out in sensations.

That wasn't too bad, and I feel better now. I just have to do that same thing every day until I change back. Feel breasts sway as I bend over... Feel the fabric run over them... Then my legs... are so smooth... Dammit! Stop it, Paul! You can deal with this. It will be fine. It will. Now, relax until Annie gets here.

Paul returned to his living room and sat back down on the couch. "Not turning you on again, you're just bad news," Paul said, addressing the television. Instead, Paul decided to lie down and meditate—a *few minutes of peaceful contemplation.*

Paul's thoughts swirled as he reflected on his day. Each additional event added extra burden and carried heavier and heavier tolls. Just being in the vicinity of an Omega-level villain incident would be enough to require therapy for those involved, and Paul's day just kept getting worse after that crisis. What was meant to be peaceful had turned. Paul sat up and felt himself becoming emotional. Not just emotional, very emotional. His body felt like it was trembling from how intensely he had worked himself up. That's when it all changed. Paul began to cry. It was not just any cry but a full-on tear storm. He wiped his eyes over and over as he sobbed and let himself work through whatever he was going through. After several minutes, Paul started to feel better, but then he remembered it had been a long time since Annie was supposed to have arrived. Paul's anxiety wasn't helping him. He had begun to imagine horrible outcomes that could have befallen his sister, and he felt that he might cry again.

All right, Paul, brace yourself. Paul thought as he placed his hand on his door's doorknob.

Let's get this over with... Annie's tormenting can only persist for so long.

Paul opened his apartment door and started to explain, but before he could get half his sentence out, Annie embraced him firmly in a hug.