

A Temporary Solution
Chapter Thirteen
Commission – October 2021

"So, what're you having?"

It's with an odd mixture of polite curiosity and interest that I watch Clair's brown eyes traveling quickly over the menu boards above us. Technically this is a date – or at the very least, one of those 'let's get coffee together' sort of meetings that could lead both anywhere and nowhere. But it's also 2019, and though I may be the guy in this particular equation, I feel no need to even offer to pay for hers. No need to perpetuate an outdated, sexist tradition, after all.

Besides – from what I've heard, this woman can definitely take care of herself. Hell, she was the one who set this date up in the first place.

"Um, can I have a grande chai latte? With almond milk, please, and no whipped cream. Needs to be dairy free." The pimply-faced but amiable barista takes her order dutifully, and soon we're chilling at the final counter, waiting for our preferred doses of life-giving calories and caffeine to be handed our way.

There's not too much to be said while we wait. Sure, I could try to make a bunch of inane small talk – and in my earlier years, I *would* have, desperate as I would have been to fill the silence. But we're both older. We're okay with silence. And we both seem to know instinctively that much of what we're going to end up talking about is not exactly the sort of stuff to be discussed in the cozy, customer-filled confines of a Starbucks.

"Hey, there's a nice bench on the other end of the park over there," I offer – and five minutes later, we're settling down onto it, a comfortable distance apart in the chilly autumn air. "You're right, this *is* nice!" she breathes, leaning back with an approving glance and sigh. "I never spent too much time in this neighborhood. Seems cool, though..."

We talk about... well, what can I say? The normal stuff at first: getting to know each other, hearing about each other's work, catching little glimpses here and there of our mutual personalities and families and interests. Turns out she's almost exactly as Devin described: a good-looking, chai-drinking cat lover with a polished, polite demeanor and a laugh that's just a bit louder than what you'd expect. I also glean a few additional items: she's got at least one other sibling, she went to a pretty decent college, and she's clearly got a good head on her shoulders.

Oh, and she's single.

"So..." she begins, after a short silence and another sip at her latte. "Um, that was quite a fun time at your place the other weekend. Thanks again for having me over!" My casual wave of dismissal may be mere polite habit, but the grin is genuine. "Oh, yeah, that. Hey, it was cool you came! I hope we didn't weird you out or anything – you know, with Devin and all..."

"No, no, it was all good," she replies with a short chuckle. "Though- you know, I have to admit I didn't expect to meet Devin there at all. You, um... you live together?" "Well, it's a long story," I clarify, wondering internally just how to word things so that they can't either be construed as a snark on Devin's unemployment or a betrayal of all his trust in me. "We, um, we've known each other for a few years. And- I mean, not romantically or anything. But awhile back he was looking for a place in this area, and we, um, you know... It made sense to bunk in together for awhile."

"Oh, sure, sure, I get it," Clair offers with a wry wave of her hand at the polished, well-maintained high-rise apartment buildings around us. "Rent these days is getting insane! But I guess," and here she flashes an apologetic smile, "I guess I was pretty surprised. I mean, sure, I'm in the scene! I'm kinky – I've seen plenty of shit. But I hadn't expected to see him there like that. Of course, I do hope you both know that I'm fine with it, that I won't-"

"Of course, of course!" I interject. "It's all okay, honestly – and we both really appreciate you being cool about it." And then I chuckle and lean closer, having made sure there's no one else within earshot. "I guess it's not every day you walk in on your employee getting their diaper changed, hey?"

"Right?" she rejoins with a knowing grin. "Talk about a real *subordinate*! Speaking of which... I guess you're mostly a dom, then?" "Dom, rope expert, bisexual, currently single," I smile. "That's what my FL says, anyway! And yeah, lately... I mean, Devin- well, you saw. He's, like, 99.99 per cent sub, you know? So we fit and play together pretty well – me as a daddy dom and him as little boy..." *Okay, good. Nothing she couldn't have already known. Time to redirect-* "How about you?"

"Oh, me? Mostly domme," Clair admits, swirling the last of her latte as she speaks. "Love me a good bit of bondage, of course. And of course there's, you know, domestic punishment and sissy stuff that fit pretty well with all that..." "Sissy play? Oh, that's interesting!" I comment, and I mean it. Not that I've never encountered it before, of course. It's just been years since I've run into a female genuinely interested in sissifying males. "You get to do that often?"

"Not as often as I'd like," she replies, a trifle hastily – and despite the waning light I think I spot a tiny blush on her cheeks as she catches herself. "I mean, well, you know! It's just so- so silly and so fun. We women wears skirts and heels and makeup all the time, and you don't see *us* getting all embarrassed about it, right? So I guess it's just funny to me to see guys so humiliated by such ordinary things..."

And then she puts the question to me. "So I know Devin seems more on the baby end of things, from what I saw. But have you ever tried putting him in, I don't know... a maid outfit? You know, lacy panties and frills and everything?"

"Oh, a maid outfit, huh? With or without the cat ears and tail?" I joke, and the resulting laughter both dissolves some of the awkwardness and buys me a bit of time to think. "Honestly, not really. I'm sure it could be fun... though I don't really know how well the look would work with his diapers..." "Oh, I bet it would," Clair asserts, shifting to face me with a wry grin on her face. "Especially if the skirt's nice and short so he can show everything off, right?"

But then her smile dissolves into puzzlement as a new thought seems to hit her. "Or maybe that's not what you meant? I mean, if he would have a problem with the lace or the panties, of course I'd understand-" "No, no, I don't think it'd be like that," I hasten to assure her. "I don't have any problem with them, and I don't know that he would either. I just assumed- You know, with him being in diapers most of the time..."

"Oh, really?" Clair is clearly surprised – and mildly amused. "So, what? Is Devin living that sweet, sweet diapered life all the time when he's not working?"

Her tone is playful, and I'm pretty sure she means no ill. But all the same, I simply can't say more for fear of betraying my Little friend. Maybe it's silly of me to have expected a fellow kinkster – and one who is in on Devin's padded secret – to have already spotted his bulgy bum at the office. But she obviously hasn't – and it's definitely not my place to blow his cover without permission.

I need more time, and I buy it by rising and tossing my now-empty cup into the trashcan standing a few meters away. "Um, well, we balance it all out," I finally respond upon my return – and even as I hear her polite acceptance of my vague answer, I can see a spark of interest smoldering in her eyes. *Uh-oh. She's too smart. She knows exactly what I'm not saying, or she damn well suspects...*

"So, anyway," I begin with a bright smile. "You were saying you majored in economics back in college?"

When I get back, it's already past suppertime – and Devin's gone out for a walk. As I swirl my fork through our simmering spaghetti noodles and reflect back on my conversation with Clair, I find myself feeling both surprisingly pleased and unaccountably guilty. Pleased because... well, Clair actually seems like a genuinely cool person – like someone I'm definitely looking forward to seeing again. After all, I wouldn't have asked her to meet again three weeks from now if I hadn't enjoyed our time together.

But guilty because... well, that one's harder to pin down. Sure, I haven't knowingly crossed any boundaries. I haven't ratted anyone out or tattled on Devin in so many words. But somehow it's just not a super feeling to know that thanks to me, come Monday a certain pair of brown eyes is going to be watching that booty of his with great interest. And I know precisely what they're going to discover.

Oh, come on, I tell myself sternly. It was only a matter of time until Clair would have noticed, anyway. Right? Right.

Now then. About that idea of a maid outfit...