

LOVE, HUNTER

Mags

“About time too! What hour do you call this then, eh?”

I stirred. A frowning, fusty dame with a craggy face, burrowed and bummed as Scrooge, hovered over the bed. Surely this wasn't Mags?

“Gone ten and still not up!” she fussed shaking a head of tightly rolled curls. “My grandfather would have had a fit! Don't think you'll be making a habit of this, not on my watch. Lord give me strength. So what have you got to say for yourself then? Come on then, speak up. Haven't got all day.”

“Mags? Nice to meet you too,” I sniffed. A searing pain shot through my skull. I winced and tried to sit up, cradling my arm.

“Well, I never! Hardly the welcome I'd been expecting. Just look at the state of you!” Mags fidgeted with chunky buttons on a dark green cardigan and smartly tugged at the hem. “Just as well I came back in time last night to turn off the heater *and* all the lights. You might have blown the whole place up!” Meantly, she leant closer, her wrinkled mouth too close to mine. “Do you know how much you've cost me electricity already? I'll be adding it to your rent, don't you worry. Lord knows what I've let myself in for taking you on.”

“The stairs,” I uttered. Dismay flooded hope. “I think I tripped. I'm not sure. Thank you, for putting me to bed.” It was evident my new landlady hadn't been dealt the tenderness card and she still wasn't done.

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“Had to drag you up in here all by myself, I did. Nearly wrenched my back out of line - causing me all this bother when I’m darn near exhausted from my trip. And you’d better have medical insurance because you’ll not be nipping into mine, that’s for sure.”

Arms akimbo, Mags strutted over to the windows led by a large, woolly bosom. The beige slacks, green twinset and sensible lace-ups screamed prim and proper. A sneeze built and burst. She looked around sharply.

“Don’t tell me you’ve got a cold as well?”

“No, no, it’s nothing.” My elbow was pounding. Sorrowfully I surveyed the puffy mound.

“Dear oh dear! So what are we, clumsy and drunk? You’re lucky there was no blood. I won’t do blood. Now then.” Straightening her horrible cardigan for the umpteenth time, Mags jerked an ear towards the ceiling. “I’ll be upstairs sorting out lunch after a supermarket visit and I don’t expect you to lie around all day either. There’s work to be done that won’t do itself.”

She trussed her way out leaving the door open and proceeded to crash around in the kitchen. I groaned and drew up the covers missing the comfort of my attic bedroom. Oh, what had I done? This woman was a total witch! The room was uncomfortably cold. I daren’t put the heater on. Somehow I stripped, washed and dried off with one arm, dragged out a jumpsuit and cautiously headed upstairs relieved to find Leon chopping parsley by the window. In baggy dungarees, a checked

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shirt and a chef's pinafore loin-clothed around his waist, the sun-lit image wouldn't have been out of place in a cooking brochure. He beamed as I approached.