Vanessa Jackson

Creative Writing 2221

Dr. Maria DeBlassie

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Fruity Pebble Faker

Monica’s back felt tight. Her arms felt heavy, and her wrists looked swollen. They very well could be swollen, heck, she couldn’t tell if they were because her eyelids kept trying to close shut and it was hard to focus on possibly swollen wrists when the knot in one’s neck felt denser than a mini boulder. All Monica Gibson wanted to do was get comfortable and sleep. She felt weak. She didn’t realize that she had dropped her keys until she heard the jangle of metal hitting concrete and the palm of her hand felt warm without the presents of the chilled apartment keys. She slumped her shoulders and reached down, but she had risen too quickly, and she became slightly dizzy and the ache in her back constricted her movements.

*I shouldn’t be this broken* Monica told herself, *I’m an able bodied twenty-three-year-old, and yet my body reminds me that I’ve got the physical strength and stamina of a hundred-year-old desert tortoise.*

Usually Monica was used to long hours at the small café on Reaper’s Street, but today’s shift felt ten times longer than any of her usual hours. She’s never been this exhausted. It would usually take her hours to fall asleep, but as she trudged her throbbing body into her apartment and shut and locked the door behind her, she tossed herself onto the couch and began to drift into a comatose state.

She didn’t stay asleep for long; the couch was comfy, but not comfy enough to truly unwind after a long shift. Using the energy that she had left, she lifted herself up and got ready to take a shower.

*You know what would sound really nice?* She asked herself, *Tea. Tea sounds nice.*

Before she left the living room, and filled her teakettle with water, and placed it on the stove to boil.

*That way when I’m done showering, it’ll be ready for me. Yeah, that sounds really nice.*

She tossed her work uniform onto the floor and waited for the shower to warm up. Steam rose and began to fog up the mirror. She sat down on the bathtub floor and let the hot shower water fall onto her body. Her shoulders didn’t ache as much as they did before, and for her, a small change is better than no change at all. She had her head leaning against the shower walls as water fell from the shower head and onto her cold face. She drifted off once more to the piddle-paddle of water hitting the bathtub floor. The only thing she could hear was the sound of the shower.

She jerked her head forward and open her eyes wide when she had heard the sound of high-pitched whistling. She looked around, forgetting that she was originally showering.

*Just make some tea and actually go to bed.* She told herself. *Heck, you can sleep naked and soaked and no one can judge what you do. I mean, who else sleeps in your bed?*

During her internal monologue, she realized that the high-pitched whistling gradually started to stop. She lifted her head and her eyebrows raised. She stood still, and her chest felt like a punching bag being tossed around by her alarmed heart. She slowly started to turn the shower nozzle off to verify that what she was hearing outside the bathroom was real.

*I locked the door, didn’t I? Well, clearly you didn’t because a stranger turned off your tea kettle and you haven’t had a roommate for three years.*

She went into a silent panic. She slowly stood up from the bathtub floor and grabbed a white towel to wrap around her body. Her eyes started darting around the bathroom.

*Crap, I left my cellphone out there.*

She started to pace, her hands to mouth, her teeth gnawing on her cuticles. It was difficult to think of solid plan when there is an intruder in the room right next door.

*If I can’t call the police, then maybe I can get the police to come to me… I’ll run out there and scream, and maybe, MAYBE, someone will hear me and call for help.*

She heard the suction sound from the old refrigerator as it was being opened and closed. She began to panic even more.

*This can’t be happening, this can’t be happening, they can’t be there, they shouldn’t be there.*

Despite her shivering body under the weight of anxiety, she felt light. She tried not to get dizzy or faint. She didn’t feel a single muscle ache in her body, but the rush of adrenaline and fear helped lessen the blow. She picked up a scrunchie and tied her wet hair into a rough ponytail. She slowly started to step to the door, and her hand and the knob barely touched before she realized that she was missing a weapon. Her eyes started darting for a new objective, and she picked up a toilet plunger with a wooden handle. She twisted the handle to remove it from the rubber suction. She slowly turned back to the door, took a deep breath, and tried to swallow her tears. She slowly cracked open the door and her heart sank when she saw a large shadow seemingly dance across the wall. Her hand was still clutching the toilet plunger handle. She brought her head back into the room and took another deep breath. She had to do something, she told herself.

*Something….*

She opened the door wider and took her first step out into the apartment hallway.

She leaped out of the room blindly, and accidentally swung her improvised weapon into the wall. She winced at the sound of the wood making a huge THUNK sound against the painted drywall and took notice of the shadow moving again. Hoping Monica didn’t blow her cover, she began to inch down the hallway, her heart pounding in and out of her chest. With her adrenaline coursing through her shivering body, she vaulted out in front of the kitchen entryway and swung the plunger handle aimlessly around without thinking. She noticed she wasn’t hitting anybody and she opened her eyes to see her friend Violet Thirne, calmly sitting at the kitchen table, sipping apple juice and munching on a bowl of Fruity Pebbles.

“oh! Hi, I didn’t realize you were here!” Violet began, “You startled me!”

Monica’s face was a vibrant red color, and she was panting heavily; she looked angry, scared, confused and sick all at the same time. Her jaw fell and her plunger handle slipped from her hand. Violet was sitting right there in her apartment, acting like nothing happened, even though they haven’t seen each other for so long.

“WHAT THE HELL?!” Monica barked. “WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?! THIS ISN’T POSSIBLE!” she looked like she was about to faint.

“I thought you’d be happy to see me?! Violet nonchalantly replied, “I mean, this was *our* apartment*, remember?* And I still had the key, so-.”

“I DON’T UNDERSTAND! HOW ARE YOU SITTING HERE IN MY HOUSE WHEN YOU SHOULD BE DEAD?!” Monica screamed. Her hair was still soaked and the cold water was running was dripping down her back and face. She could taste the bitter soapy water mixed in with her hot tears.

“I understand, why you’re stressed, but allow me to explain.” Violet tried to calm her down, but it didn’t help.

“WHAT IS THERE TO EXPLAIN, VIOLE-, I-, HOW DID YOU-?” Monica was breathing heavily and rhythmically. She felt dizzy again, and she was so uncomfortable and petrified that she could faint. She tried her best to stay conscious.

“Look, it sounds really weird to say it like this, but I am being absolutely honest, and you have to promise me that you won’t get mad.” Violet requested.

Monica couldn’t answer without choking on her tears. She can’t promise anything in this state of mind.

“Look, I-…” Violet started, but she paused and took a deep breath staring into the ceiling. She gathered herself. She took a double take and saw Monica pacing around the den, and Violet rushed to hold her. Monica couldn’t say anything, so she just whined and took a step back, her hand stopped Violet from taking another step.

“Monica, there were a lot of things going on in my life and I felt like the only real thing to do was to… disappear…”

Monica’s chest felt heavy and she had to comprehend all of Violet’s words before she could respond. Monica didn’t want to believe a ridiculous idea, so she stood there blankly, waiting for a better explanation.

“I faked my death, Monica…” Violet took another deep breath. “I felt like there was something I couldn’t run away from and I… I did what I had to do…” Violet took a pause and looked up and down at her best friend. Are you mad at me?”

Monica’s throat felt dry, and she tried stop the tears from pouring out. She still couldn’t breath very well. She started to walk away from Violet and pace around the den again, and she clutched her hands to her head and started to yell.

“MAD AT YOU? I’M FURIOUS! WHO WOULDN’T BE UPSET!? YOU ATE ALL MY CEREAL AND YOU FAKED YOUR DEATH FOR THREE FUCKING YEARS! I WANNA KNOW WHY! I WANNA KNOW HOW?!”

“Well I was hungry and thirsty and I still had the key to our apartment, so I walked in and made myself something eat.” Violet clarified. “Look, calm down, I’ll just buy you more cereal.”

Monica was appalled. She was not expecting that casual of an answer.

“IT’S NOT ABOUT THE CEREAL! I WANNA KNOW WHY YOU DID WHAT YOU DID!”

“O.K., O.K., fine.” Violet began. “You remember Tommy, right? Tall, black hair, glasses, kind of a nerd, into science and junk, and-?”

“You mean your *boyfriend*?” Monica interrupted.

“Yeah!” Violet exclaimed, “Well, *EX*-Boyfriend. I didn’t like to be around him, so I did the only thing I had to.”

“FAKE YOUR DEATH?!” Monica roared.

“Well when you say it like THAT, you make me sound crazy!” Violet retorted.

“You couldn’t have just broken up with him like a SANE PERSON!”

“I didn’t want to hurt his feelings.”

“NOT COOL, VIOLET!”

“C’mon Monica, you would’ve done it, too!”

“NO, I wouldn’t Violet, who would do that? “

“*I* would, I thought we decided that?” Violet’s face looked lost for a moment.

Monica looked like she wanted to scream again. *COULD VIOLET REALLY BE THAT STUPID?* Monica’s face was a glowing red color, her body was still shaking, from confusion, anger, or the fear of a murderer in her kitchen. She had so many questions for her; how did you NOT die while we buried you? How long have you been planning this? Primarily, and most importantly,

“WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?!” Monica enraged.

“You know, you don’t have to keep screaming, I get it, ‘I’m crazy’ blah, blah, blah!” Violet mocked. She was offended by her reaction to this whole debacle.

“Oh I’m sorry; *I wouldn’t want to upset you or anything!*” Monica grumbled.

They stood in tense, awkward silence for a couple of seconds.

“Look, I just wanted to be gone until Tommy moved on, did he?” Violet asked.

*How dare she expect an answer from me?*

“Yeah, he’s got a girlfriend, Shelly. I’ve only met her couple of times since your FAKE funeral.” Monica snarked.

“See! All is well, I’m alive and Tommy has moved on, we could get back to our lives.” Violet said with excitement. “I’m assuming that you don’t have any of my things, so we could go to the store and get more stuff for me.”

“NO, I *don’t* have any of your things; after all, you were gone for *three years*.” Monica justified and with a huge sigh, follows up with, “I’m angry and upset, but I knew you were crazy when I met you, not *this,* crazy.

“Monica, can you forgive me?”

“Violet, I can forgive you, *but* I don’t have any reason to right now, ok?”

Violet paused. “I guess that’s fair.”

“But do we have to go, *right now*? I’m emotionally exhausted from all of…. *This*?”

“that’s fair, too. Take as long as you need” Violet wanted to hug Monica, but they both seemed to be in a sensitive place.

Monica rushed into her bedroom and slammed the door. She lunged onto the bed a started to cry again. She pulled the covers over her freezing body and face and tried to keep her hyperventilating under control. She was still quaking, and everything felt numb.

*I can’t believe that she would do something this reprehensible, so vile, so… selfish.*

Monica cried herself to sleep. She forgot about the world, she forgot about Violet, she forgot about everyone and everything. Hell, an axe wielding murderer could show up and kill them both, but Monica didn’t care.

*At least her death would be real this time.*