

# MAD SCIENCE

By ChronoEclipse

## Chapter 4: Reasoning With a Mad Scientist

Hannah's eyes were closed tightly, her heart beating a mile a minute. "Oh god, I really don't want to be an old lady!" She thought to herself. "I have enough body issues without having to worry about wrinkles and saggy skin."

She felt wet and sticky. Something was sliding down her shirt but it wasn't her boobs. Hannah opened one eye and looked at her hand, it appeared to still be smooth and young.

"I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry!" A voice in front of her called. She looked in front of her and saw a young man in front of her who she recognized. She looked down at her chest to see the remnants of an egg dripping down it.

"Melvin! What the hell?" Hannah screamed at the young man.

Melvin was a guy who had gone to high school with Hannah and Conner and was known back then for being an incredible dork. Conner constantly ridiculed him but Hannah had always felt bad for him.

"Sorry, I just... I was aiming for the house." Melvin tried to explain.

"What are you doing out here in the first place?" Hannah asked, still annoyed.

"Well see, I've been trying to get a job since I graduated last spring and I haven't been having much luck. Then your brother messaged me on facebook a few weeks ago saying he would get me a job at his firm. I go in today and your brother basically uses the job interview to ridicule me and then tells me he'll 'Get back to me if a position opens up'. So I came here to egg his house." Melvin told Hannah and her anger softened. Melvin was the quintessential underdog – too socially inept to be popular and too dumb to be successful.

"I'm sorry Melvin." Hannah said sincerely.

“No, no... I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to egg you. Here let me clean that.” He began brushing her chest with his sweaty hand. Hannah quickly removed his hand from her with a polite smile.

“That’s all right Melvin... I’m kind of in a hurry.” She explained.

“Oh yeah? Where to?” He asked.

“Um I have to, well... What do you know about the woman who lives in that house up on the hill?” Hannah inquired.

Melvin gave her a concerned look. “Oh I hear she’s totally bat-shit bonkers. She doesn’t let anyone in her house and people say she’s building a death ray or something. The only person I know who’s even talked to her is this guy Ryan Narbonne.”

Hannah’s eyes got big. “Wait, Ryan knows her?”

Melvin shrugged. “Well he and I worked for a land-scaping company over the summer and he said he did some lawn work for her. I don’t know.”

Hannah began walking down the street. “Thanks Melvin. Good to see you... don’t egg our house!” She called back to him and she raced away.

Hannah dialed the campus directory as she walked across town. She got connected to Ryan’s dorm room number but there was no answer. The beep came to leave a message and Hannah quickly hung up.

She finally had an excuse to talk to Ryan but was still too shy to leave him a message. Hannah sighed and made her way up the hill to the mad scientist's house.

She came up to the large creepy house. Though the house itself looked weird and run down. The front yard looked surprisingly well maintained and inviting. ‘Ryan did a good job.’ Hannah thought to herself.

She slowly raised her hand to the door. She was a bit terrified but she knew she had to do this for the sake of all the girls who had been aged prematurely in the past two days. The doorbell rang and Hannah waited. Nothing. She rang again cautiously and when no one came to the door she rang the bell impatiently five times in a row. Finally the door flung open and a crazed woman of indiscriminate age with scraggly brown and white hair and thick glasses answered the door. "WHAT!?" She bellowed.

Dr. Gerasco was an exceptionally tall woman. She wore a large white overcoat and black and yellow rubber gloves on her hands. On her head was a pair of protective goggles. To say she looked bizarre and intimidating was an understatement. The fact that she towered over the petite Hannah and looked furious didn't help matters.

"Um h-hello miss... sir... doctor... Gerasco. I'm um, well hi I'm Hannah... I'm well I guess you'd say we're neighbors. I live in the house down there. And um... I think you and my brother got into a fender bender the other day and I think he might have inadvertently said some things that might have offended you. Believe me, I know how he can be. And well, some odd things have been happening at our house lately and I don't want to, you know, point any fingers and say you've been zapping people with some... oh, I don't know... age ray... but, I uh... wanted to apologize on my brothers behalf and just maybe ask that if you did happen to be firing some sort of time altering device in our direction that you maybe stop and um... puteveryonebacktonormal?" Hannah gave the doctor a big hopeful smile.

The doctor's face softened. She looked at Hannah and smiled back, though her smile wasn't nearly as inviting as Hannah's had been.

"Let me see if I understand you correctly. Some people in your household have suddenly become afflicted with accelerated aging?" Dr. Gerasco asked coyly.

"Yes ma'am... er miss... er doctor. Two local college girls and a pair of jr. high girls I was tutoring." Hannah replied, still maintaining her endearingly hopeful smile.

“How sad for them. That’s very fascinating, you should have the university study them. I’m sorry I can’t help you.” The doctor said and began to shut the door.

“Wait, you can’t just go...” Hannah demanded, shocked that the woman would just leave it at that.

The doctor gave Hannah a terrifying stare that made the girl recoil a bit from her courageous stance on the front porch. Then the doctor’s face softened again into an even more unsettling smile.

“Young lady. If I were in a house where young women were suddenly becoming shriveled old hags and I suspected someone of causing their premature aging, and then I went to her house to reason with her. I would accept whatever answer she gave me. If not for believing that she’s telling the truth, and she has nothing to do with it, then at least because I would want to keep my youthful beauty for as long as humanly possible!” She took off her rubber glove and brushed her surprisingly bony hand across Hannah’s cheek as she said this, giving the girl a bit of static shock.

Hannah was terrified and nodded when the woman finished and quickly backed her way off the woman’s porch and ran down the hill as fast as her young legs would allow her, blocking out the sound of the doctor's maniacal laughter all the way down.

She got back to her house and quickly slammed and locked the door. The two old ladies on the couch woke up with a startle. “Young lady, would you be a dear and help me get a fresh diaper on? My boyfriend did it last night but he doesn’t seem to be around today...” Brianna asked creakily, letting her robe hang open giving Hannah an unfortunate view of the olive-skinned grannies’ sagging tits and stomach.

Tiffany’s wrinkled face twisted in a sudden rage. “Your boyfriend!? Whatever skank! He was mine first!” She rattled in a shrill voice at the frumpy old woman beside her.

The two old ladies began bickering as Hannah was preoccupied with making sure all the windows of the house were covered and locked.

“I started hooking up with him over sixty years ago!”

“He was fucking me senseless almost seventy year ago!”

Hannah was perplexed by how their selective memories worked. She had had it with their arguing though. “Ladies! Ladies! My brother’s only 25. He couldn’t have been sleeping with you over sixty years ago. He wasn’t born yet. And even when he was sleeping with both of you. I don’t think he considered either of you to be his ‘girlfriend’ – he’s just not that kind of guy. Now, let’s get you both cleaned up and put to bed.”

The old women looked at each other silenced by Hannah’s words. They nodded slowly and let Hannah put them to bed.

As she exited the guest room the phone rang.

“Conner?” She answered quickly.

“Hannah?” A woman’s voice asked on the other end of the line. It was Hailey’s mother. ‘Shit!’ Hannah thought to herself. ‘I completely forgot about them.’

“Hiiiiii Mrs. O’Brien how are you this evening?” Hannah asked, trying to play it cool not sure what to expect.

“Frankly Hannah I’m pretty worried. Hailey never came home from her tutoring session today and I just spoke with Paiges’ parents and neither did she!” Hailey’s mother explained with a sound of concern in her voice.

‘Shit shit shit shit shit shit!’ Hannah thought, trying to come up with something.

“They’re... fiiiiine Mrs. O’Brien... They’re over here....” She said, crossing her fingers.

“Oh? What are they doing over there? Why didn’t my daughter call me?” Mrs. O’Brien demanded.

“Oh it’s um... a field trip... I suggested that the girls spend the night... the weekend here and we’d cram a bunch of studying in... and go do fun educational things... Sorry she didn’t call you...” Hannah walked over to the counter where the girls tattered clothing was and saw Hailey’s cell phone with 25 missed calls. “They said something about their cell phones dying, I just assumed they called and got permission from you before hand...” Hannah banged her head against the refrigerator thinking to herself how screwed she was and that this story was totally bogus and about as thin as wet tissue paper.

“Oh. Well, can I speak to her?” Mrs. O’Brien asked, the concern in her voice gradually leaving.

Hannah’s eyes lit up in amazement that the mom was buying this crap. “Uh well, she’s out in the yard looking at constellations with um, my boyfriend who’s this really great astrology major...” Hannah figured ‘We’re already in this lie now, let’s just go for broke.’

“Mmm all right. Well just have her call me when she gets back in.” Mrs. O’Brien said simply.

Hannah reentered panic mode since Hailey was neither at the house nor would she sound like the precocious 13 year old girl Mrs. O’Brien was expecting to hear if Hannah did have her on site.

“I...” She was stumped on this one.

“Actually, you know what? Just let them be. They’re old enough to be left alone for one weekend to have their fun. And you promise they’ll be learning a lot?” Mrs. O’Brien asked.

“I’ll cram a lifetime’s worth of wisdom and knowledge in Mrs. O’Brien.” Hannah told the mother.

“Good. Hailey’s father and I could use a weekend to ourselves. You’re charging how much for this?” She asked pointedly.

“Oh uh, no charge. Just what you owe from today’s lesson. The rest is on me. Just a fun educational girls weekend!” Hannah said enthusiastically.

“Well that’s great! Thank you so much Hannah. I’ll call Paige’s mom and let her know so she doesn’t worry either.” Mrs. O’Brien said equally enthusiastically.

“Awesome. Well thanks for calling. Talk to you soon!” Hannah said and quickly hung up the phone and slid down onto the floor. She miraculously dodged a bullet but was still boned.

There was a knock at the door. Hannah’s eyes opened wide with terror. She crept to the window and pulled back the blinds slightly. She saw a middle aged blonde woman with a midriff baring top on and tight skirt waving at her from the front steps.

“Yoo Hoo! Hi dear! I’m back!” Paige called at her in a sing-songy voice only older women use.

Hannah quickly unlocked the door and let her in, glancing up and down the street before slamming and relocking the door.

“Where is Hailey!?” Hannah demanded flustered.

Paige grinned a knowing grin and chuckled slightly. “Hailey met a man at dinner and decided to go back to his place!” She told Hannah.

Hannah’s face filled with horror. “What?”

Paige looked overjoyed, oblivious to Hannah’s facial reaction. “Yeah I know! Isn’t it great? He’s a bit younger than her. Probably in his mid thirties. Very handsome. He came right up to our table and shamelessly flirted with us, saying he’d have to card us because he thought we looked like a couple of teenagers!” Paige chuckled.

Hannah was stone faced as she continued to listen.

“I guess he must have a thing for older gals. He knows we can teach him a thing or two!” Paige playfully slapped Hannah’s shoulder. She was obviously tipsy.

“Who is this guy? We have to go to his house and get Hailey.” Hannah told the fifty-something drunk woman.

“Oh she’s fine. He’s just some teacher at the local middle school. He’s a complete gentleman.” Paige said, stumbling toward the couch.

Hannah’s shock and disgust hit the peak for the night. “What? He’s your teacher?”

Paige plopped down on the couch and tossed off Hannah’s open toed shoes that had been a bit too small for her. The chubby blonde flexed her older toes that were showing some bunions and rested her head down on the pillows.

“He’s not our teacher, silly. He thought we maybe had daughters in his class. Said we looked related to some girls he... teach...es...” Paige nodded off.

Hannah tried to clear her mind and went and grabbed her phone. She quickly dialed her brother. It went to voicemail. She hung up and dialed again. And again. Finally her brother picked up.

“Hello?” Conner answered, sounding a little annoyed.

“Tell whoever it is that we’re kinda busy!” A young woman’s voice could be heard in the background.

“Conner it’s Hannah!”

“Hannah... we’re kinda busy...” Conner whispered to her through the phone.

“I’m really freaked out Conner.” She said, Her voice began to tremble.



Conner melted at the sound of his sister about to cry.

“Oh no sis, come on. It’s going to be okay, what's the matter?”

“I don’t know what to do! I’m sure that crazy woman on the hill has been zapping people with an aging ray but you and I are the only people that know about it and went to ask her to stop and she basically threatened to turn me into an old lady and like wouldn’t agree to stop and my favorite shirt got covered in egg and by the way did you agree to hire Melvin and then just dick him around? and I have four women who are ages that they shouldn’t be and they’re all somehow my responsibility even though I don’t even really like Tiffany and Brianna and Hailey’s mom thinks her daughter is on a special field trip with me but the truth is she’s out banging her thirty-something year old teacher who doesn’t know that she’s really thirteen and if anyone finds out he could go to jail or I could go to jail or someone could go to jail and I need to put everyone back to normal by Monday!” She spurted out a mile a minute as one long run-on sentence.

“Why? Because you have class on Monday?” Conner asked.

“What? No. I don’t have class on Monday. The girls, all the currently old women in our house – they have class on Monday and people will be missing them if they’re not there!”

“Yeah okay, but you have class on Monday too.” Conner added.

“Conner, what are you talking about? I haven’t had classes since we graduated.” Hannah told her brother.

“What are you talking about? You’re still in college. This is your Junior year.” Conner stated not sure what to make of what was going on with his sister.

“Why would you be a college graduate and I still be a Junior? We’re twins.”

“Uh no... you’re four and a half years younger than me and a Junior in college.” Conner said, sounding almost annoyed.

Hannah didn't respond. She knew what he was about to ask before he even asked it.

“Hannah, when you went to that woman's house, did she do anything funny to you?”

‘Fuck.’ Was all Hannah thought.