

From Party Pooper to Diaper Pooper

September 2022 – Commission

Chapter Three

"Michael! Oh, my god. I heard all about what happened last weekend. And just after I'd left, too! How are you doing? It's not still hurting, I hope..."

Ms. Adams is... she's quite a character. I'm not exactly interested in dating just yet, least of all a woman a good twelve years my senior. But she has a certain *je ne sais quoi* – a sparkle in those brown eyes, a way of flipping that shoulder-length brown hair, a bounce and jiggle of her generously curved chest – that I can't deny. She's an objectively pretty woman, slim and athletic and kind... and yeah, overall a very nice sort of person to have as your neighbor.

I bring my unusually disorderly thoughts to heel abruptly, clenching a trifle more tightly at the railing of her garden's little picket fence. I'm still not sure how I got roped into doing this... but there's no turning back. The others are counting on me, after all. "Umm, no, no, it's fine! Really. It stopped bleeding after only a few minutes. It wasn't that serious..."

Her eyes narrow in ill-concealed righteous indignation. "Bleeding? After only a few minutes?!" She shakes her head in clearly rising exasperation. "Look, Michael. I know you want to be a nice guy and all. I know you don't want any more trouble. But goodness – you literally got *assaulted!* In your own house! You're the legal guy, right? There's got to be plenty of grounds for you to have him hauled off to court, I'm positive. And really, how do you expect to become a good lawyer if you don't step up for yourself, hmm?"

I shift uneasily, trying not to let on just how deeply her last words have struck home. "I- I know," I manage. "I know I'm entirely within rights to call the police. And you know, I really don't want him to hurt anyone else..." I glance hastily around at the sound of a car easing past, wanting to be sure we're not being overheard. "But actually, that's why I came over. I- we, I mean... we've been thinking. And we have a pretty good idea about how to handle this whole thing, nice and discreetly, without any legal issues..."

Ms. Adams' expression shifts into one of eager interest. "Oh, really? You've got a plan?" She lowers her voice and bends closer, sending an involuntary shiver rippling across my arms. "Remember, he's got a gun – at least one. And I wouldn't put it past him to use it, either..." "Oh, we know about that," I reply hastily, shifting the backpack on my shoulder and glancing once more about before proceeding. "If we do everything right that won't be a problem. Now, the idea is pretty simple,

really..."

I break off momentarily, feeling a hot blush rise to my cheeks. "It's- it's kind of weird, I know. And it's really not my idea, I promise. But the others are positive it's the thing to do, and, well... I don't think it's entirely ethical, but..."

"Come on, spit it out," she encourages, and her reassuring smile sends a rush of newfound courage through me. "Well, you see, we were thinking about- you know, how childish he seemed to act," I explain. "So then some of the others said that he really ought to be disciplined – you know, like parents do little kids? And so... well, the upshot is that we, um, we thought we should keep him at our place for awhile..."

"Disciplining him?" She seems simultaneously shocked and amused. "Well, yes," I admit, shifting awkwardly. "But more than that. Treating him like... you know, like a little kid. Like a baby, actually..." "No way," she breathes, and close as I am to her fascinated stare I can only drop my eyes and shuffle in rueful embarrassment. "I mean, yeah. Some of the girls, they, uh... They know a thing or two about babysitting. And they said that making a nursery for him... keeping him there for a few weeks... punishing him and stuff? They said that would serve him right, and you know, teach him not to be such a violent person..."

"Babysitting," she repeats, and now that I look up once more I can see she's intrigued by the idea. "Oh, my god, I can totally see it. No, really! I mean, you'd have to restrain him somehow. But let's face it, that's exactly what we do with little kids, isn't it? Teach them not to hit and everything, and doing what's best for them even when they don't want it? God, I bet he'd be so embarrassed, too – being treated like a *baby!*" She's giggling, and I can hardly believe how readily she's taking to what to me still seems like a ludicrous – and yes, rather unethical – idea. "I mean, that's kinda the point," I continue self-consciously. "We'd have to find some way to get him-"

Suddenly she's shushing me, her hand frantically gesturing for silence. "Shh-" she hisses, before breaking off and waving brightly behind me. "Hey there, Bob! Nice day today, isn't it?"

I half-turn in time to see Bob himself – a mere three houses over – stepping heavily forward toward the curbside trash bin, a large trash bag in one hand and that customary scowl on his jowly face. "Ehh, whatever," he mutters, or something along those lines, before reaching with pudgy fingers for the trash bin and chucking the bag in with a heavy rustle and thump. "Mind yer own fuckin' business," he snarls then, and we are left to stand there in awkward silence, watching him wheeze his way back to the house and disappearing inside, the door slamming shut behind him with all the

friendly charm of a brick to the face.

"He really is a piece of work," she sighs softly, then motions me toward her. "Though that was a bit of a close call! Come on inside, why don't you? As long as you're here and have the time, I want to hear all the details – and how I can help you out..." This being precisely what I'm after, I'm certainly not going to refuse. And so it is that, before I quite know it, I'm sitting down at her little kitchen table, easing my computer out of its case and loading up the special incognito browser I've been using to conduct my, ahem, *research*.

"See, it's honestly not as tough as I first thought," I begin, and somehow now that I have my charts and browser tabs and familiar notes before me it's easier than ever to warm to my subject. "It's actually a thing, believe it or not. I've discovered that there's all kinds of people who like to play at being babies, even when they're adults. See, there's this outfit that makes these oversized cribs..."

I bring it out with a few clicks, and Ms. Adams lets out a gasp and giggle of delight. "Oh, my god! That's- that's incredible! And look – what does that say there? 'Locking bars?'" "Um, yeah," I admit, and give an apologetic shrug. "I mean, you can't expect him to want to stay in there. So some of the others are already talking about options for medical restraints. Nothing to hurt him, of course. Just to keep him-"

"Nice and safe and secure," she breathes, and now I can see a gleam of something akin to delight in her eyes. "Locked away for his own good. God, I've been thinking about how much better I'll feel when that guy is behind bars, you know? And-" She breaks off in a giggle. "I mean, crib bars aren't *exactly* what I had in mind. But hey, why not? As long as he learns his lesson..."

And then she breaks off, struck by a new thought. "Wait. You said like a *baby*. So, like, how much of a baby are we talking? Like... bibs? Pacifiers? You're not thinking... *diapers*?" I flush and nod despite myself. "Um, I think so? Here, I have this list of stuff Cas- I mean, one of the others told me to find. And weirdly enough, it's all pretty easy to find online..."

There it is: my table of items, complete with suppliers and prices and estimated shipping costs. "Holy moly," she ejaculates, and bends so close I can practically feel the warmth of her skin radiating against my bare neck. "Plastic pants. Diapers. Feeding bottles. Romper. Adult onesies..." She lets out another giggle before proceeding. "Locking mittens? Feeding gag? *Straitjacket*?!"

"Well, it's like I said," I interject. "We can't really expect that he won't put up a bit of a fuss-" "No, no, this is perfect," she chuckles, and as she settles back in her seat she is shaking her head in

incredulity and delight. "Never in a million years would I have imagined such a weird solution. But..." And now she's gazing speculatively at me with those pretty eyes of hers. "Wait. You came over here for something, Michael. What is it, exactly, that you need from me? Because believe me, I'm more than happy to assist..."

Now comes the hard part. "Well, first off we just wanted to let you know so you don't worry if he, uh, you know... disappears for a few weeks," I begin with a wry smile. "I don't suppose you could clue the rest of the neighbors in, could you? That would be a huge help-" "Consider it done already!" she chuckles, with another toss of her hair. "Believe me, I'm going to have a hard time *not* telling anyone about this. Of course, I'll make sure no one breathes a word to that lout before you're ready..."

But before I can utter my thanks, she breaks in with a frown and a glance at my computer screen. "Now, no offense, Michael. But it looks to me like all of that stuff is going to cost a pretty fair amount. How are you planning to pay for it all, exactly?" *Dang, she's sharp!* "Um, well," I begin, not quite sure where to begin. "I mean, it's definitely a good bit. We were thinking if we all chip in a bit here and there, and maybe cut back on our drink budget, and sell a few of our old textbooks-"

"No, no, no," she replies briskly, and before I can stop her she's rising from her seat and fetching her little purse. "Michael, listen to me. I want this to happen now more than anything. Yeah, it's weird – but I want this guy to get what he has coming to him. Heck, I'd have paid to see him through rehab and anger management if that meant I wouldn't have to worry about him coming over and shooting the place up..."

She reaches over and drops a credit card onto my keyboard. "Here, use this. Get every single one of those things on your list, Michael. I mean it." She flashes a wry smile. "Listen, I'm single. No kids. And yeah, teaching preschool isn't exactly the most lucrative profession. But I've got more than enough to cover that with plenty to spare. So don't you say a single word about it. Just use it..."

And even as I stutter out my thanks, she grins and shrugs affably. "And yeah. Keep me posted. Because I'm *dying* to see what you folks end up doing with that nut job!"