

The Squid

To say that he was an ugly little man would be an understatement. At thirty years old he was five foot nothing, equal in girth with man breasts that should be supported in a bra, premature balding on a misshapen head that made his protruding brow look like a rain guard over his sunken dark eyes, hair as thick as the pelt of a gorilla everywhere else from the back of his neck to the ends of his fat stubby toes and fingers. He made Danny Devito look like a Chippendale dancer in comparison. Even his parents abandoned him as a child and he lived on the streets of L.A. for how long he didn't know until he was scooped up and placed in a Catholic orphanage. But he was never placed with a family and even some of the nuns held him in distain. The world was a cruel place.

It wasn't that he was totally without gifts. He had a mind that was quick and he used it to his advantage. He graduated high school early seeking to escape his tormentors only to find more of them at the university. He selected a career in medicine to become a plastic surgeon because he believed if he succeeded maybe someday a woman would get past his appearance and focus on his income and maybe...just maybe...love him.

It wasn't to be. Even graduating at the top of his class as a surgeon didn't get him in the door of a west coast clinic. They wanted only beautiful people to work on the beautiful people and he definitely didn't qualify. After short contracts at local hospitals he scraped together enough money to open his own small clinic off Neilson Way in Santa Monica and hung out his sign. With his clinic at street level he lived upstairs and planned for financial success. He installed a large fish tank as a divider between the waiting room and the surgical suite as watching fish

always made him relax. But the reaction was the same and the beautiful people didn't come. He ended up being the surgeon sought after by those who had nowhere else to go and by ladies of the evening desiring professional enhancements or liposuction. At least they sometimes paid him in the performance of professional services for all or part of their bills and many were actually nice to him, at least most didn't treat him with disdain.

In the evening when his clients left him alone to go and pursue clients of their own, he would climb up on top of the building and look out at the Pacific Ocean while drinking himself into a stupor and wishing his life was...different.

Sitting there in his drunken haze, looking out at the enormity of it all made his life seem inconsequential, his failures and short-comings...meaningless. As he pondered there was a rattling of bottles and trash below him close to the dumpster.

Damn rats! He thought to himself as he threw a half empty bottle at the ruckus. "Get out of there you filth!"

The top of the medical waste dumpster lifted up a bit and then closed back down. It had happened before. The rats would rip open the plastic bags that contained the lipo-sucked fat or other tissues and make one hell of a mess as they fed on the human bi-product.

He climbed out onto the emergency escape ladder and steadied himself as his head began to spin and forcing back the feeling you get just prior to throwing up, before starting to climb down. At the bottom, he had to let go and drop the last few feet as his didn't reach all the way to the ground. He held on to the wall for a moment before walking over to the medical waste dumpster that was painted red and banged on it a couple of times, but no rats emerged. He opened up the top just enough to warily look in and at first saw nothing...then he saw something move.

He blinked a couple times in the fading light to make sure he was actually seeing what his brain was telling him was there. Next to one of the bags of lipo-sucked fat was some kind of squid, but not like any he had ever seen before. It was grey-ish pink in color and only had four tentacles. The bulbous body was about the size of his two fists put together and slightly bifurcated. There was some kind of tendrils sticking out of the ends of the tentacles and into a hole in the bag it was next to. The eyes seemed to stare at him and then it did something very un-squid-like. It pulled back the tendrils, stood up on the tentacles as if they were legs and ran to the other side of the dumpster away from him.

He just stood there in shock as it looked back at him from the other side of the dumpster. He smiled at the squid and thought about what a nice addition it would make to his fish tank. "I'm not gonna hurt you buddy...just come here and let me get you out of this messy dumpster!" He put his hand down and held his palm open and to his surprise the squid slowly walked over and sat on his hand.

"I have just the place for you! You gonna love it!" He said through his slurred speech.

He opened the back door of the building and past the old bathroom he now used as a utility closet and over to the big tank, stopping for a moment at the specimen refrigerator to grab another beer. He put the squid in the water and watched it swim around as he sat down on one of the couches in the waiting room closest to the tank and began sipping his beer. The squid looked at him through the glass for a while and then swam up to the top, opened it a bit and squeezed out. He watched it climb down the outside of the tank and onto the arm of the couch and then onto his arm.

He watched as it sat there and looked at him and then a tendril started coming out the end of one of the legs. It engaged his skin with a small prickly feeling but he didn't think it could really hurt him.

"What is your name?" He heard in his head.

He shook his head and blinked...looked around and then back down at the eyes of the squid.

"What is your name?" He heard again.

He was just drunk enough to answer. "Fritz."

"That is a funny name."

"What's really funny is that I am talking to a squid!"

"What is a squid?"

"You are a squid."

"Is that what you call me?"

"That is what you are."

"I see...and what are you...Fritz?"

"I...I am a people...a human. "Although I may not be a prime example of the specie."

"I don't understand."

"I lack many of the desire qualities to be selected for breeding...procreation."

"Think about what the epitome of a male would be to be selected for breeding."

Fritz concentrated for a moment before images of tall, handsome, well built men flashed through his mind.

“That would take a lot of energy to change you from your current form.”

“It would take a blasted miracle!”

“Almost.” Replied the squid as Fritz fell to sleep on the couch. The squid repositioned itself atop his head and sent tendrils up his nose that stretched out and down into the rest of his body. After a few hours the squid climbed back into the tank.

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Fritz woke up the following morning as his assistant opened the front door. Anna was a retired lady of the evening and had gone to ‘night school’ during the day to become a nurse and sometimes filled in the roll of mother for the man in between doing the paperwork for the office. She looked at him with a bit of pity but said nothing about the condition he was in. Fritz smiled at her through bloodshot eyes, stood up and felt a little stiff but none worse for wear.

“I must have really hit the bottle last night! I had the strangest dreams!”

Anna smiled wryly at him and then looked at him more closely. “Are you using Rogaine again? Maybe this time it is working.”

Fritz walked over to the patient bathroom and looked in the mirror. There was a hint of stubble growing on his scalp. He turned on the water and splashed it on his face and looked again...yes hair was growing. He looked down in the sink and there was hair in the water. He looked at his hands and they were almost bare.

“You got about 15 minutes to get showered and ready for your first patient. You best not mess this one up. She’s got money and friends with money...word of mouth could really help us!”

Fritz ran up stairs and pulled off his clothes as body hair flew into the air. He jumped into the shower and the drain looked like a small animal had died there as now his body was completely devoid of hair except for the new growth on his head. He ran back down to Anna and the waiting patient being prepped.

“Would you like me to assist doctor?”

“I don’t think that will be necessary as we are just doing a little lipo to sculpt the chin.” Fritz replied. “Good morning Mrs. Schwartz, and how are we doing today?”

“My husband recommended you but I have no idea how he found a cut-rate plastic surgeon...he said you do great work but I have never heard of you before.” Mrs. Schwartz stated. “And see what you think about my breasts.

Fritz smiled and figured her husband got his number from one of the hookers he had worked on and that Mr. Schwartz was probably a client...and looking at the woman on the table it was not hard to guess why. She was far past her prime. Everything was sagging, fat had collected where it shouldn’t and didn’t collect where it should to be pleasing to the eye.

“She is gonna take a lot of work!”

Fritz’s head popped up. “Did you say something Anna?”

From the other room Anna replied. “No...is everything OK?”

“Yes...fine...I just thought I heard you say something.” Fritz was also worried that Mrs. Schwartz had heard it as well but she showed no reaction.

“She is gonna take a lot of work.”

Fritz looked over at the fish tank and saw the squid looking at him over the top of the glass. He thought to himself... “I must be hallucinating!”

“You’re not hallucinating, we are communicating telepathically.” The squid said directly into Fritz’s head. “I gave you that ability last night so that we could talk.”

“I thought that was all a crazy dream!”

“What dream?” Mrs. Schwartz replied.

“Ahhh nothing...Mrs. Schwartz.”

“Let me help.”

“What do you mean?”

“You have seen what I did for you...let me help you with her...fat is my specialty!”

Fritz walked over and picked up the squid.

“Put me on the table next to her neck.”

The squid moved under her neck and the latched on with all four tentacles. Multiple tendrils came out and burrowed into the woman’s skin. “What would she look like if she were more youthful and healthier?”

Fritz imagined what the woman must have looked like twenty years ago and then fantasized a bit about round buttocks and large breasts.

“She will sleep while I work. Do you think she would mind if I take fat and move it around her body and then remove the excess?”

Fritz smiled and thought. “I am sure Mrs. Schwartz would be pleased!”

The squid went to work and Fritz could see the tendrils extending under the skin throughout the body. Slowly he saw the fat on the woman’s belly begin to dissipate as the breasts began to inflate, being rebuilt from the inside-out. The woman’s skin began to tighten and take on a much more youthful appearance as the cracks on the face around the eyes and lips filled back in and the wrinkles disappeared. A clear globe of fat began forming at the back of the squid’s body and dropped to the ground when it was the size of a baseball. “Pick that up and save it for me, please.”

Mrs. Schwartz looked at least twenty years younger and probably better built than she had ever been in her life. When she woke up she was groggy and in a hurry and left without even looking in the mirror, but within the hour the phone started ringing, booking the appointment calendar full for the next six months. And so it went week after week and each night the squid would work on Fritz until he was six foot four and the vision of the perfect man, until one day when the squid stated. “I want a body...a female body, as I am a female of my species.”

With Fritz’s hospital privileges they went up to the morgue but the only body was one of an old woman who had died just a few hours before... “It will have to do...imagine what the perfect woman looks like to you. Put me on the head.”

The squid reached its tentacles into the mouth and up into the skull and began pulling out the brain and eyes and when she was done climbed inside with her eyes filling the sockets of the old body...which began to move... “Take me home.”

When they reached the clinic the body walked into the old bathrooms tub. “Cover me with all the globes we have collected and then close the door. Do not open it. I will come out when ready.”

Five days later she emerged and was everything Fritz had ever dreamed of. “Let’s go for a swim.” She said.

Wrapped in towels, they walked over to Ocean Park and walked right into the water and out to the deep. Fritz held her hand as they dove to find to his surprise a large round orb. They entered an airlock and the squid sat the beautiful body down in some kind of a chair and then emerged out the mouth but the body kept breathing. “You can come out too!”

“What do you mean?”

“You can come out.”

Fritz felt strange as he disengaged from his own body and slid out his mouth. “What has happened to me?”

“I selected you as my mate and you were not happy with your body so I built you a new one...you are now as I am...we will leave this world. Didn’t you not know that beauty was only skin deep?”

“I am squid?”

“You are you and have been and will always be you. And I love you.”