

A Fable of Misfortune

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With dusk the shadows grew. Individual straws of grass concealed amongst each other, making themselves seen only as a gust brushed through Dune-groove park.

Under a tree stood a couple, a boy and a girl. The boy kept giving shy glances towards her. As the last graze of the sun left their faces, he turned to speak, battling his embarrassment to confess his feeling. Yet, the face that turned towards him was one of a maw parting.

-Krrfhhsish-. The Tree above them shook, a sprinkle of evening-glory washed the two of them, the scene came to a freeze as their clothes were showered in the past day's rain.

The girl smacked their lips. "This isn't working out," they said in a dry tone – contrasting their wet clothes – and left.

The boy slumped down against the tree trunk and sighed. -Kloognnkt-. Whereby a horseshoe landed in his lap. Getting the hint, the boy grasped his crutch to flee the scene.

~ 1 ~

"Just losers and nobodies out n' about," Brona mulled from her scouting tower, a tree house which remained a popular hideout for children. -Ktch-. She snapped another horseshoe to her chest-plate, turned with the prongs down towards their belly, so it looked like a smile from her perspective, and no one else's. "He shoulda brought an umbrella." The creature proclaimed with pride in their bosom as they unfolded their own parapluie. -Thoolp-.

-Thund- "Yeowch."

The yelp surprised her. Sure, she had felt something against the tip of her umbrella, but she was alone. "There more spirits in ere?" Brona said and spat. -Phithioo-.

"Euujuk..." A displeased voice rang out after the spittle had landed.

"Seems as much."

"Apologise, right away," the invisible voice expressed its annoyance.

At the little voice Brona suckled her lips. "Yeah I'm off," she informed and clacked her roller-skates together, hurling herself out the cabin door and riding down the bark, snapping off branches and twigs which spiralled to the ground just moment before she landed. "Cain't bother mysejts with others on the busiest day of the yeaoaaaah-."

While she droned on two more thumps had followed her, and unseen hands at her knees felled her like a redwood.

"Ooph. Hey get away." She shooed and kicked off the invisible grip, raising back on the skates and rolling down the park path.

Taps of feet drummed at her tail, never far behind.

"Geeze, those pricks didn't ear me the first time?" Speed was a factor here. The frills and flaps of her dress were certainly pleasant – like a bundle of flags thrown off of a cliff – but aerodynamic they were not. Ahead she spotted the unfortunate boy from earlier, snatching the crutch from his hands with only a: "Imma need these, thanks." before she was gone.

Approaching the road she utilized the crutch as a pole and vaulted over the evening traffic. While she soared through the air she imagined her dress flapping like the feathers of a glorious peacock – while the few onlookers saw a tumbling turkey.

-Krrkkтч-. The snap of plastic came as she met ground once more, one of the wheels caught in a street-crack fractured from the impact.

“Shooahaha.” leaving her stumbling forwards. Half running, half gliding, she sought refuge through the back entrance of Ristorante Mag-Pie.

”Waht in-.”

“Who would eve-.”

“Ey I'm walking fondue ere.”

“Outta my way, scooch over, this train got no breaks,” she huffed out whilst veering for chefs and waiters. Despite having the skates under control she wasn't about to slow down to be caught by whatever chased her. “Cutie express gotta stay on shedua-hahahueaaaa-.”

In her haste she had knocked over a chef carrying a salt incense, the white crystals laid out as gravel under her skates, and her course redirected away from the front exit and out on the terrace. Brona twirled with a path of salt laid behind her stumbles as she was flung head over heels amongst tables and patrons.

“Oooaaaaawwaa – mmphhg.”

-Grhloorusgh-. And with a clasp she was sealed in moisture.

13 secret? Ierona spells their name two ways, they tried to arrive previously, but had bad luck

~ 2 ~

Sinforoso dug ditches in his dessert, carving the ice-cream around the pear half. The imp sighed while glancing over to his date.

The slug-girl he accompanied to the ristorante had shown impressive gluttony with the appetizer, slugged off in munching and conversation at the main course, and now she too had resigned to prodding the gelato.

He coughed and scratched the tip of his imp tail. “You wanna, catch a saga before dark, or...?”

“’S kinda late though,” she responded, concentrated on digging.

“Right,” he kept scratching.

She glanced up. “Why d’ya keep doing dat?”

“Haven't gotten in a good stretch today I suppose,” Sinforoso muttered and splayed the tip. Once his date kept staring at the pit of flesh that parted at the end of his tail, he whipped it behind himself and let the gape engorge. “Pretty impressive, ri-iihhgg-.”

-Grhloorusgh-. The tremors from his tail spread all the way to his arms, Sinforoso slamming his fists onto the table as if to release the strain from having that amount of pressure exerted on his tailpipe all at once.

-Bhoghooulp-. Flesh contracted over the plug which had so suddenly jammed itself up his rear-whip, sensing his skin stretched taut over the figure being dragged into the tail-maw. Behind the chair one could make out the bloat of the midnight blue appendage, which enclosed the squirming figure.

He grunted and flailed it downwards to dislodge, -Ghrollbg- but the brawn lining the inside already laid moulded over the intruder, with intent of introducing them to his body properly.

-Bwoonmb- -Bhrosl-. Splashes of fluids lubricating the presumed meal were muffled enough by the surrounding tail-meat, disguised as growls off hunger.

“Hnhfag...” He burst out and felt the weight slamming his tail to the ground.

The bump inside flailing by the impact, bulges swelled in formations of knuckles and elbows, but sank just as quickly whilst the tunnel contracted to funnel the morsel deeper. The brim

pursed and undulated along the frills of quite a bizarre ball-gown, crawling to slather the fabric in as viscous hold of liquid. -Ghrborbmlg-. The bloat ferried upwards, inflating the tail like a straw being stuffed with marbles, valleys and peaks forming along the tail to shape the frame of a feminine physique.

“Mgmnf. C-com on n-not now.” Sinforoso huffed out and heaved the tail up in his lap, cheeks puffed like pillows from exhaustion.

-Grhsoshg-. In his grasp the tail framed its catch, clasping the dress like a flower bouquet, except the leaves were flapping silken frills and the flowers were the legs that flailed like mad.

The imp bent down to cover it in his lap, which only squeezed the 'bouquet' forwards over the table.

-Sluplh-. It grasped and vibrated towards the roller-skates, flesh crawling like a mollusc over the polymer footgear, to encase its prey. Coating the intruder like a hull of molten plastic, the tail sprawled and squirmed as outlines of limbs swelled into view. The impressions stretched the flesh as it bound through the tube, as if someone gave it their all to suck a marble through a straw.

His efforts eventually resulting in containing the bulge in his lap, out of view. -Wbmgh-Rhgwong- The tumbles still had him twitching and twisting whilst the end deflated back to its pursed point, the bulge engorged further, following along the course which only lead to to his back.

-Ghrllsh- “Ummf...” he huffed out as the lump met with his back at the base of his tail. “Mfmegas... stay down...” He pleaded whilst cradling the stomach warping to a distended heap of flesh in his lap, swelling and distorting with the bulges that floated across his belly, just beneath his shirt.

-Bhrloomb-. It bounced and rumbled as the clump filled out to a rotund gut. The rhythmic -Ghrllshp- matched the rate to which his gullet expanded. -Phowolp-. -Knwooop- Until the tail pumped his gut so full it snapped a button of his shirt, allowing a dune of stomach flubber to lug out at the gap in his clothing, oscillating with the rumbles and motions contained to his abdomen. -Plglllsh-.

His tail wagged. Sinforoso’s breathing was all that cut through the evening atmosphere.

-Bhrugl-bhslop- His gut brewed like a pressure cooker. -Bhuraaaaaooollrrp-. His lips parted for the gale of gullet exhaust, cheeks rosy as the air was infused with the saline belch. His embarrassment only grew knowing his date sat right across. “Ghglruk...” -Aoooooraahp- another gust heaved up a plug in his throat, with a bit of finagling, a puff of murky breath carried out a horseshoe -Chlung- that rattled down onto the table.

Each breath heavy with gut grog, Hair, dress, pants, everything laid caked in the humidity from the swamp of a gut she had been sent to. “Rude. Least I’ve got those ghosts off my tail, but didn’t mean I wanna end up yours,” she complained with words as well as fists.

“Wow...”

“Ah... y-yeah.”

Voices barely made it through the insulating belly flesh, though was just enough to make out the shame which painted her cage’s words.

“So I... this was-.”

“So das whay you been so stingy with food, had’I know you could order ‘that’ I wouldn’t have filled up on entrées.”

-Ghrhobslm-. The gullet growled to punctuate the companion’s statement.

“Oh, pull the other one why dontcha... lucky for him is cosy in here,” Brona sighed, the mood outside picking up after that exchange.

Engaged in conversation through the rest of the evening, Sinforoso eased his mind about the incident. -Ghrbugskkl-. It only came back as a reminder now and then – when his stomach chimed in.

-Ghhrbsgglt-. His abdomen quivered and pulsated with from the indigestion his impromptu meal had cursed him with, yet he stomached the tangs and pinches, to give his date some attention. Even though she seemed quite interested in his belly and the lumps that sailed over it.

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-Grllhg-. -Pffhiioorrht-. “Pha... Apologies, I suppose,” Sinforoso whispered and poked his gullet, the humidity wafting out from his internal bog masked by the odor raising from the trash bin, as planned.

-Frrrbrrthf-. The plumes of smog heated his cheeks with tingles of derrière musk. -Shhriiftl-. “Mmfng...” Leaving him grumbling as the load welled up towards his waste chute.

Through Sinforoso’s rear grew a bubble, while he scooted and strained on the brim of the container the sphere grew like a bead in pure onyx. “Mnfgr.”

-Phwollurlp-. Once the bubble burst, his pucker contracted to a pencil-thin pit for but a moment, -Ghrrrlp- to then swell over the mound of demon-bile sloughing through. Coal black tar billowed in globules to size of his fists, engorging the ring of flesh so the furrows laid straight as it crawled over the equators of the black wads. -GrrrgPblshdf-. Whilst the dollops of tar dropped on the corner of the bin, their impact mimicked the smack of banana-cream pies at circus practise.

-Grhsllgup-. To its consistency, the mulch resembled whipped cream, had the main ingredient been motor-oil as a dairy replacement. And then, sprinkled with straps of dress tatters. -Ghlrlp-. Black fluff clumped together into a hill against the metal enclosure. -Sphhrflfth- Aired out in clouds of fumes – pluming like factory smog. Mounds broke apart, puffs of gas flinging out droplets of sludge to drizzle down over the garbage, while substantial slugs trickled down the walls like molten wax. -Krlffrt-.

“Mfnhg... trying to go easy on you,” Sinforoso complained to the clog stopping up his rear.

With the tap grinding to a halt the heap below had a chance to ooze in peace, crawling across trash-bags like the fingers of a slime, lashing them in tendrils of soot-jam. -Skllrth-. Sometimes there came a smear from a length of dress frills – those which survived the intestines – now plastered out from the substance sloughing forth, glued to garbage sacks like the stickers of nightmare.

As Sinforoso struggled the muck beneath congealed and drooped in a symphony of jelly, grinds of mud – when clumps merged – and the crinkle of waste being compacted beneath the weight of an imp’s waste.

-Bhrusugs-. -Shruusff-. Churns sounded from the rim, bowels hugging down the bulk of the tar bales jamming up his rear, squeezing towards his pucker. -Frhhbbrddt-. The crackle of humid slop pressured through the pucker took hold once more, with a knob of bile matching the hue of the night sky. -Spturht-. -Frrrbrrwth- With a grumble and a blast of flatulence the tar dropped off, all the more as the grime slithered off the blackened bone as the bales of bile were heaved from the rump. Leg-bones, pelvis and what could have been a cranium jutted out through the soft-serve flow of molten licorice, whilst the vertebrae, teeth and a few finger-bones were smeared flat against the surface.

-Ghrolsugh- A tremble of reversed suction shook Sinforosos's spine, the dam now broken and bloated with the surge of liquid cast iron, despite flowing and spreading below akin to the pear gelato he shared the day before, the flow singed his rim like brimstone flavoured chilli.

Calcium toned grey from digestion decorated the licorice sludge like marshmallows, up until it reached the amassing bulk of the mountain below, where flabs of tar moseyed down the pile and buried the traces of skeletal matter. -Pgshhiro-. With bone chunks sinking again, air pockets formed to where the bile foamed like a mud stew. Streaks of steam curled upwards, mingling with the odor of past produce and trash with the pungency of tart, fiendish goo.

Sinforoso shut one of the twin lids to the container, in an attempt to restrict the gas, which only left his cheeks rosy.

-Grhhsiisth-. With creaks of rubber, the putty billowed out from its humble funnel to claim ground over the garbage. Drove heaved forth by the weight resting behind it slumped over plastic and loose cans. Steam had gathered and condensed to a mist, the torrid bile transforming the improvised outhouse to a sauna. -Ghrbrosougl-.

“Hnnghhfff...” The imp wheezed with his pucker stretching over a dense slab of tat, its weight tearing through the bonds that kept the pillar stretching down solid, and toppled to extend the reach of dark mud into the shadows.

-Shhftudf-. This far in, the tar slumped out with a density of wet sand, bales building with the tubes of granular mulch drooping over, still bones scattered through the mass, now desolate like the toy-spades and tools left in a kid's sandbox. With the odd bone being recognisable, the mulch's movement and look got a certain air of personality, Shifting dunes of bile reaching to submerge the plastic bags and clotting thick to gum the garbage together in its grasp, a blob absorbing all the more mass into its form. -Pshhfrggrtlu-

“Phot... Phaa...” Sinforoso panted as his pucker twitched and drummed with gas sneaking out along the loaves of oily dirt. -Sfhhfgt-. Contracting his rear to sever the flow, -Splushhdf- a tail of tar slumped onto the pile with a splash of a liver hitting the butcher's floor. “Phowa... Wooo... Least I didn't have to show my date that part,” the imp consoled himself and slipped down to ground level, “or... would she have liked that too?” His fluster grew, thinking back to yesterday, how she had been over him after the little... incident. It wouldn't surprise him if she had wanted to watch this as well, slugs were odd, though this one was something else.

His thoughts were already long removed from the pile spreading and gelating into a carpet.

After a while, the footsteps could be heard against metal, a hand pointing down to the filth. “Serves you right.” but in the next moment, a breeze picked up, and two little cries were heard as something invisible was blown into the bin.

~ ~ Epilogue ~ ~

With that, the storyteller closes the tome, and placed it on the bin lid next to them. “And with that, it makes it clear, that one person's bad luck, can be another's benefit. For without misfortune, there is neither fortu-.” -Bhoowmb-. The lid rattled from impact. “What in the infinite void was that?”

-Bwoonkk-. “Move your fat'ass.”

The storyteller – somewhat perplexed – shifts off the lid.

-Crrrkf- With a creek it is flung open, and a girl pops her head over the brim.

Across their neck was the inscription BrΩna imprinted, however the curves on the B didn't quite reach the line at any point, giving it the impression of an I and a backwards E.

She shook off some trash and clambered up on the brim. “Pheew, was getting cramped in there.”

She was met with silence.

“What? Didn't you just explain it?” Her lips curled to a grin. “There can't be fortune, without misfortune.”

Thus, not one, but two figures disappears from Ristorante Mag-Pie's back alley, as dawn blooms on the horizon, leaving nothing in their wake – with the exception of a trail of oily footprints.